"THE UNSEARCHABLE WISDOM OF GOD": A STUDY OF PROVIDENCE IN RICHARDSON'S PAMELA.

By

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Samuel Richardson's Pamela, in both character portrayal and plot construction, mirrors a world order in which the active presence of God and His Providence was viewed as essential for the continuation of all human existence. A correct understanding of the many references to Providence in Richardson is necessary to any meaningful interpretation of Pamela, its significance in eighteenth-century literature, and the "ethos" of which it was a part. That within Pamela specifically, this "ethos" is a Christian one, is clearly indicated in the sub-title, "Virtue Rewarded," which focuses immediately upon the problem of "Poetical Justice" and the existence of an omnipotent God. This problem is not unique to the Eighteenth Century, but is to be found in writers dating from the earliest epochs of Christian polemics, and, as Thomas Rymer pointed out in the Seventeenth Century, the presence of a Poetical Justice operating in

literature was but a temporal manifestation of the eternal justice of God, a justice revealed through a "special" Providence which punished evil and rewarded the good, and a justice without which nothing of any worth could survive.

Within such a world order, it was believed that man frequently underwent various "trials" for purposes of strengthening his faith or revealing to him the necessity for right action and humility. Thus, the "testing" of Pamela, coupled with the final reward of her virtue and beginning reformation of her tempter, point to the presence of a traditional Christian theme in Richardson's first novel. Moreover, to view Richardson as indeed writing out of such a tradition helps to clarify much of his achievement in Pamela and establishes a more satisfying starting point for the critical analysis of Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison.

CHAPTER ONE

Pamela and the Critics

In the "Preface" to Sir Charles Grandison, Samuel Richardson, in the guise of "Editor of the following Letters," states of his first novel, Pamela,[1] that it "exhibited the Beauty and Superiority of Virtue in an innocent and unpolished Mind, with the Reward which often, even in this Life, a protecting Providence bestows on Goodness. A young Woman of low Degree, relating to her honest Parents the severe Trials she met with from a Master who ought to have been the Protector, not the Assailer, of her Honour, shews the Character of a Libertine in its truly contemptible Light. This Libertine, however, from the Foundation of good Principles laid in his early Years by an excellent Mother; by his Passion for a virtuous young Woman; and by her amiable Example, and unwearied Patience, when she became his Wife; is, after a length of Time, perfectly reclaimed."[2] Although attached to his last novel, this Preface emphasizes some of the major concerns of Richardson's work, and it is my contention that the major terms in this passage, "Virtue," "Reward," "a protecting Providence," "severe Trials," a "Libertine reclaimed," are not casual items of diction but rather point to the fundamental design of Richardson's first novel. This design in some sense derives from a "fictive mirroring" of what was considered to be the world order of his day. In many ways, it is almost impossible to appreciate fully Richardson's novels apart from this generally accepted world order, which, as I hope to show in the following chapters, was Christian, created by an omnipotent God, sustained through a

Providence both "general" and "particular," and in which the "reward" of suffering "virtue" and the "punishment" of "vice" were not the tenets of a sequestered faith, but things believed actually to occur in the world. That Richardson the man was a Christian is readily admitted,[3] but the significance of the Christian language and situation, in particular the importance of "Providence" within his novels, is still the cause of much critical controversy. Most critics have stressed the superiority of Clarissa as a novel,[4] Richardson's artistic innovations or debt to the contemporary theater,[5] his proto-Freudian characterizations;[6] even those few who have investigated the Christian elements in his novels have either misunderstood them or have not adequately supported their arguments.[7] What is needed is a revaluation of Richardson's thematic concerns, and as a start, it will be helpful to review pertinent critical appraisals of Pamela.

It is not to my purpose to give a running survey or "box-score" of the more than two centuries of Richardson criticism. It is apparent that his literary reputation has never stood as high as it did during his own lifetime. The "raptures" of his female correspondents, the praise of such men as Denis Diderot, the Abbé Prévost, Samuel Johnson, Colley Cibber, Aaron Hill, Edward Young, Alexander Pope and others, is amply documented in the biographies and collections of correspondence listed in my bibliography. Even the attacks, Shamela and the multitude of "anti-Pamela" literature, have been listed and discussed many times.[8] My bibliography contains the material used in preparing this study, and can serve as a beginning for anyone interested in assessing the manifold critical approaches to Richardson, or in amassing a scholarly consensus regarding his literary reputation. In place of the "survey" approach, the critics

discussed in the following pages were selected for being both recent and representative of the attention paid to the Christian elements in Pamela. Thus, while most present-day scholars would not agree with Joseph Wood Krutch's statement that Pamela herself is "so devoid of any delicacy of feeling as to be inevitably indecent,"[9] or with F.S. Boas that the "story is in itself somewhat sordid and incredible, not seemingly suitable to be spun out through two volumes,"[10] there nevertheless has persisted in critical appraisals of Pamela a curious ambivalence toward the Christian elements of her story, and toward a "Virtue Rewarded" in particular. Throughout the twentieth century, with a few notable exceptions, critics have been prone to lament a so-called "moralizing" which somehow hinders Richardson from being taken seriously in his first novel. Even in those critics who attempt to deal with the Christian framework of the novels, however, there is evident what seems to me to be a mistaken emphasis.

Roger Sharrock, in "Richardson's Pamela: The Gospel and the Novel," essentially argues that Pamela is "Christian" and "realistic" in the sense that the Gospels, both in their "method of presentation" and subject matter, "deal...with common life, the lives of soldiers, harlots and tax collectors, and the sufferings of the sick."[11] To Sharrock, this influence of the Gospels on western civilization, an influence which operated against "the classical principle of noble themes and lofty style" (71), ultimately made it possible for lower-class characters to be taken seriously in literature, a phenomenon which culminated in the eighteenth-century novel in general and the works of Samuel Richardson in particular.[12] That Pamela so zealously defends her "chastity" (for Sharrock not the "letter of physical purity" but rather "a brave insistence on her individual rights, the prerogative of all children of God", (69)) establishes her

as a prime literary example of "the new aristocracy," filled not with the epic heroes of classical literature, but rather with "ordinary men and women" who "feel that their meanest everyday actions may be endowed with nobility and significance" (67); it is an "aristocracy" whose literary counterparts stand in opposition to the "old classical, hierarchical aesthetic" which Sharrock sees prevailing in the Middle Ages and Renaissance (69).

While Sharrock's suggestion that the Christian insistence upon the intrinsic worth of each person is pertinent to an understanding of Pamela, his evidence and terminology tend to confuse the issue in various ways. After offering a survey of the Medieval and Renaissance literary practitioners of a Gospel-oriented sermo humilis and their conflict with a classically-oriented sermo sublimis (70),[13] he turns to the influences of the "social and religious traditions immediately available to Richardson in the eighteenth century" and concludes them to be "Puritan and middle-class" (72). Seeing a "line of development running from Bunyan's Life and Death of Mr. Badman through Defoe to Richardson", Sharrock first emphasizes that Pamela was most influenced by a tradition of "bourgeois Puritanism," and then states that:

> it is only fair to admit that the value of Richardson's work is severely qualified by the more immediate bourgeois tradition governing his attitude to the story. When he forgets his exemplary moral attitude, then all is well: he is possessed by the myth he has created. It is the idea in the sub-title, "Virtue Rewarded," that stands out to offend the modern reader, as it offended Fielding (72).

After mentioning the influence on Pamela of "conduct books like Bunyan's Christian Behavior and its successors", and the "manuals of letter-writing," Sharrock then states that from "these sources Richardson inherited the Puritan moral idea in its decadence. Calvinism had always

inculcated that the Lord would reward his saints, but now the reward takes the form of vigorous social aspiration" (72). Further, Sharrock posits the view that although the Lady Davers scene shows Pamela as an eighteenth-century example of the Christian "new aristocracy," as having intrinsic worth equal to that of a well-born lady, there "is in fact a considerable moral ambiguity here: on the surface Richardson seems to be saying that virtue is ennobling in any walk of life; underneath it looks more like a complacent claim of 'I'm as good as you are', with the acceptance of social climbing as a mark of moral achievement" (73).

This evaluation of the Lady Davers scene, it seems to me, ignores the fact that most of Pamela's retorts are delivered in the face of excessive provocation, even to the point of "slaps" and the near drawing of a sword. It also fails to speak to the problem of how one asserts one's "prerogative" as an important creature of God, as a member of the "new aristocracy," without at least actively defending that "prerogative" from the assaults of either the lustful or the haughty. Despite his provocative insight into Pamela as a work which both insists upon the importance of each human life and owes its greatest accomplishment[14] to the "Christian recognition of individual personality" (74), he appears baffled by the concept of the "reward" of "virtue," and even seems to deny his own thesis by finding "moral ambiguity" in the actions of a Pamela who staunchly defends her new status and intrinsic worth. In many ways, Sharrock's article demonstrates that it is easier to talk of various techniques such as the use of "journal narrative," or similarities between Gospel parables and the eighteenth-century novel, or Medieval and Renaissance forerunners, than it is to evaluate the larger implications religious language and connotation hold for the novel in general and

Pamela in particular. Whether through his constant interchanging of the terms "Christian," "Puritan," and "Calvinist," or by ignoring the context of a particular scene, Sharrock, like many modern critics dealing with the religious elements in Pamela, tends to confuse rather than illuminate the text. I think that a blind acceptance of the "religious tags" offered by previous critics has created a fertile ground for such confusion. Sharrock himself, accordingly, trustingly accepts the view that Richardson's first novel grew out of a "Puritan" or "Calvinist" tradition, when a careful reading of the canon reveals that none of the major characters in the novels appears to be anything but orthodox Anglican, hardly to be confused with the generally accepted view of "Puritans," and that Methodists are referred to as "overdoers" by Lady G. in Sir Charles Grandison.[15] It is difficult to see how Richardson, himself an orthodox Anglican, can stand for a "decadent Calvinism."

Michael Davitt Bell, in "Pamela's Wedding and the Marriage of the Lamb," attempts to demonstrate that Richardson produced in his first novel a "fully-developed stereotype" of "romantic love."[16] Agreeing with Ian Watt that Pamela also marks the "emergence" of an "immensely influential stereotype of the feminine role", Bell nevertheless differs with Watt's efforts to trace the source of this "stereotype" to the "rise of 'economic individualism'", and further states that the "marriage crisis", however much it might explain the "extraordinary popularity of Pamela once it got written," does nothing to "account for how the novel got written in the first place" (100).[17] Since he views the novel's major events as "anything but realistic", Bell discounts the possibility that Richardson "discovered his stereotype in the social situation of his time" (100). Taking this reasoning a step further, and doubting that the

"language in which the characters speak is copied from real eighteenth-century middle-class conversation", Bell suggests that the "question of the source of Richardson's stereotype of romantic love becomes in part a question of the sources of the language in which Pamela and Squire B. describe, and engage in, the new love relationship" (100).

Having established the need to examine the language in Pamela, Bell initially proceeds to underscore certain words in an attempt to trace their source. Choosing a passage found on page 220 of the Norton Edition, he highlights such words as "repent," "truly sorry," "judge," and "pardon," and suggests that they are indicative of what he terms a "strange theological understructure", which Richardson inherited from the "sermons and conduct books of his time" (100).[18] Despite this acknowledgment of the source for much of Richardson's language, for Bell a "language of love," he soon denies that the presence of this "buried theological 'meaning'" has anything to do with "what is going on on the surface" (102). As proof of this, he asserts that "Richardson frequently employs theologically charged words" in a highly ambiguous way (103), most noticeably in his use of "Grace" and in his general presentation of Mr. B.

Bell next argues that it "is sometimes...difficult to tell whether the theological or secular meaning is intended" by Richardson in his use of certain terms, with the "overall effect" being a subsequent blurring of the "distinction between religious and secular" (102). Noticing the numerous occurrences of the term "Grace," Bell indicates that it is frequently impossible to determine which meaning Richardson is insisting upon in any given context. At one point, he cites Pamela's offering "assurances" that "she shall have so much grace, as to hate and withstand" Mr. B.'s "temptations," were he not merely her master but her king,[19] as

evidence that, despite the theological association of "grace" with "temptation," what it is really intended to connote in this passage is "good fortune" (102). At another point, "divine grace" is mentioned and Bell accords it a full theological meaning. At the time of the wedding, however, the "tender grace" with which Mr. B. performs his part in the ceremony is evidence for Bell that Richardson again has confused the issue by making the Squire "(formerly the tempter) into an agent of Christian grace in the marriage of his servant" (103).

Continuing to indicate instances of ambiguity in Richardson's use of religious language, Bell next discusses the presentation of Mr. B. Noting John Dussinger's theory of Christian "perfectionism,"[20] and stating that "Pamela is not a religious allegory, nor is there in it any submerged stream of Christian symbolism" (103), Bell asserts that the use of a vocabulary usually associated with God, in connection with Mr. B., implies that it is he, rather than Pamela, "whose role, in spite of his lechery, most nearly resembles that of the Christian deity" (103). For Bell, a partial result of Mr. B.'s association with the "Christian deity" (although he certainly denies that the Squire is to be taken as a "Christ figure") is Pamela's frequent failure "to distinguish between the goodness of her earthly master and that of her divine master" (106). Since he argues that there takes place throughout Pamela a "fusion of Christian and romantic" elements (106), a method which consistently applies "religious terminology to romantic experience" (107), Bell views Pamela's "confusion" (especially when coupled with the "ambiguity" evident in the use of "Grace" and other "theologically charged" words) as part of Richardson's own conscious effort to "not distinguish, throughout the book, between divine and earthly", presumably for some larger artistic purpose (106).

Bell soon states that the presence of so much religious language in Pamela does not mean that its effect "depends on the apprehension of the religious parallel, at least not in any literal sense", but rather that the "emotional" associations connected with it allowed Richardson "to tap for his own secular purposes the strongly emotional religious current of his day" (108). Thus, for Bell, the "meaning" of the novel is not "particularly religious," and the references to religion found in it merely serve the function of adding "emotional impact" to an otherwise improbable story.

It is soon evident that the "strongly emotional religious current" which Richardson was able to "tap" for his "secular purposes" in Pamela was a byproduct of the "Great Awakening" (108) and the subsequent emergence of "Christ-adoration" (109). Bell therefore posits the interesting yet unsupported thesis that, like the Mariolatry of the medieval period and its appearance, however thinly disguised, in "the new literary treatment of sexual relations known as Courtly Love" (110), Pamela stands as an eighteenth-century example of "another literary version of sexual relations--the notion of romantic love that has dominated the English novel since Richardson," a love which arose primarily from "the eighteenth-century...adoration of Christ" (110). Using George Whitfield as source for this interpretation, Bell argues that eighteenth-century adoration of Christ was associated "with a woman's adoration of her husband" (111), thus (and as Ian Watt also notes) making marriage essential and causing widespread "anxiety" among women over not only the possibility of spinsterhood but also "of eternal damnation, of external exclusion from the Marriage of the Lamb" (112). For Bell, this "anxiety" helps to explain both how Pamela came to be written and its phenomenal

success, and he concludes by stating that:

> The innocent Pamela--trapped, alone, injured and despairing--has thus an appeal far beyond what her story itself, improbable and ridiculous as so much of it is, would seem to warrant. It is no small part of Richardson's accomplishment in Pamela that he was able to tap this vein of anxiety that lay beneath the surface of eighteenth-century English life by importing religious terminology, and the basic Christian action of trial and reward, into the realm of romantic love (112).

Despite Bell's interesting assessment of the "sources" of Richardson's "stereotype" of "romantic love" and the language of that love, a few points are confusing. First, it is difficult to accept a charge of frequent semantic ambiguity when the evidence used to support such a charge is often inaccurate or wrenched from context. Bell's suggestion that Richardson's use of "Grace" indicates a refusal to "distinguish" between a "religious and secular" meaning throughout Pamela (102) does not stand up under close scrutiny. The sentence in which Pamela supposedly offers assurances that she "shall have so much grace as to withstand" Mr. B.'s "temptations," for Bell a statement equivalent to desiring "good fortune," and "ambiguous" if given a theological meaning, actually reads: "But, Mrs. Jervis, I continued, let me tell you, that I hope, if I was sure he would always be kind to me, and never turn me off at all, that I shall have so much grace, as to hate and withstand his temptations, were he not only my master, but my king; and that for the sin's sake."[21] That this statement represents an assurance of any kind by Pamela is doubtful in the light of her use of the word "hope," a word deleted by Bell. As to any "ambiguity" in Richardson's use of "Grace" here, it also should be noted of this sentence that in the First Edition Pamela hopes "that God will give" her "his Grace" in order to withstand the temptations which surround her, a statement followed on the next page by one in which she

once again hopes that "God would give" her the "Grace" not to give in to these temptations.[22] Although it is partially the task of this study to examine the implications of Richardson's use of religious language, most notably his use of "Providence," it should be stated here that of the more than thirty times where "Grace" appears in Pamela, it is consistently linked to God and the personal strength granted to man by His "assisting" goodness, a use hardly to be confused with "good fortune." This is not to say that there is a single meaning for the word "grace." There are, as Bell notes, also instances where the word is used in a "social" context. I would not agree with Bell, however, that these instances are to be lumped with the others and taken as proof of confusion between religious and secular concepts, primarily because of the clear and consistent distinction which Richardson draws between them. There is, it seems to me, a crucial difference between hoping for God's "Grace" to withstand temptation, and carving cake, performing in a wedding ceremony, or doing things in general "with a Grace, as one may say, where they are to be done" (Riverside, p. 218).

Secondly, the interesting observation that the language by which Mr. B. is described and in which he frequently speaks is suggestive of the "Christian deity," is nevertheless seriously qualified by a failure to speak to the larger implications arising from such an insight. Bell appears to see in Mr. B.'s "Godly" attributes an attempt by Richardson to use religious language and connotation for secular purposes, an "intention" which he thinks is proven by Pamela's frequent failure "to distinguish between the goodness of her earthly master and that of her divine master" (106). That this is not the case is evident even in the passages which Bell cites. Noting Pamela's letter, after her marriage,

to Mrs. Jervis, in which she rejoices that she is now "enabled by God's graciousness," and her "dear master's goodness", to call herself Mr. B.'s wife, Bell states that there "seems to be no essential difference, at least in their effect on Pamela, between" the "graciousness" of God and the "goodness" of her new husband (106). Bell here seems to give a merely willful misreading of the passage, and any confusion seems his rather than Pamela's. That Pamela consistently distinguishes between divine and earthly obligations is apparent from statements made by her on numerous occasions, most particularly in her last letter where she characterizes herself and Mr. B. as respectively being able to dispense "third-hand" and "Second-hand" good, while God only is able to dispense first-hand blessings and to "HIM, therefore," should be given "all the Glory" (Riverside, p. 407).

Bell's insight into Mr. B. as a character appearing "God-like" on numerous occasions, however suspect the conclusions which he draws from it may be, is nevertheless provocative. He seems satisfied, however, merely to point this out and use it to demonstrate his thesis of Richardson's secular adaptation of religious themes. He generally seems unaware of the larger implications, within a religious context, of Mr. B.'s actions as "judge" or "pardoner" of one who, throughout the novel, appears only as a suffering innocent. Whatever similarities there may be between Mr. B. and discussions of God from the sermon literature or "conduct books" of the time, they are for Bell difficult to square with such things as the Squire's lechery and previous promiscuity. Viewing this difficulty as an insurmountable obstacle to taking the religious language very seriously in Pamela, he argues a purely secular meaning for the novel, a meaning dependent upon Richardson's skillful exploitation of contemporary religious thought. If indeed there are passages in

Pamela which imply a relationship between Mr. B. and the "Christian deity," it seems essential to consider carefully their total implication, and hopefully attain a more comprehensive reading of the novel than that offered by claims of "ambiguity" or secular adaptation of religious themes. I would suggest that these similarities in language between Mr. B. and "an angry God" or an "unforgiving...Justice or Father of the Puritan dialogue" (104), coupled with the fact that Pamela refers to him on one occasion as "Lucifer" in the "Shape" of her "Master" (Riverside, p. 181), links him, symbolically at least, with a wide range of "diabolical" figures present in both literature and theology, and suggests he may be a prideful man who has in effect usurped the prerogative of God, and, as a result, must be taught that God's and not man's will must be done. Bell's insistence, however, upon the "ambiguity" with which "theologically charged words" must be taken, tends to make Mr. B. not only an "unrealistic" character, but also one devoid of any larger significance, serving little more than as a motivator of action or partial cause of "emotional impact" (108).

Briefly, I think it is essentially simplistic to interpret Pamela as the secular result of an artistic "exploitation" of religious or psychological "anxieties." Such an interpretation, if offered as Richardson's major intention, not only narrows the scope of his effort, but also fails to attack the work on its own terms. An underscoring of the presence of religious terminology in a novel carries, it seems to me, the subsequent necessity for specifically assessing, in context, the total implications of such terminology. Before it is possible to accept Bell's conclusion that Pamela is a natural result of such things as "economic fear or fear of old-maidhood" (111), or "terror at the thought

of eternal damnation, or eternal exclusion from the Marriage of the Lamb" (112), one must be provided with more evidence than he offers in his article. In general, the major difficulty with Bell, as indeed with Sharrock and most recent critics, is their failure to take the Christian elements in Pamela as individual manifestations of a tradition which is broader and richer than such "tags" as "decadent Calvinism" or "spiritual anxiety" would seem to indicate.

Gwendolyn B. Needham, in a lengthy article dealing with a reexamination of the character of Mr. B., states that the "fatal words Virtue Rewarded have served too often as a lily-white standard or a red flag to the critics, who thereupon debate the utilitarian Puritan code of morality, neglecting the novel itself."[23] Viewing Pamela herself as an unreliable narrator, Needham sees Richardson struggling throughout the novel with problems both "moral" and "social."[24] For Needham, it is ultimately "Mr. B.'s inner conflict and its eventual resolution which Richardson uses to shape the structural pattern of his story and to determine its climax and conclusion" (447). Expanding on this view, she suggests that "Pamela, despite ambivalence, temptations, doubt, despair, never wavers in her heart-and-soul belief in the righteousness of defending her virtue, and therein lies her strength; her suspense is due to Mr. B.'s indecision, not to her own. Only when his farewell letter compels the conscious recognition of her love does she experience brief inner conflict, the resolution of which Richardson also uses to effect the story's climax" (447). However good this makes Mr. B. look, if one grants Needham's premise, the actions of Pamela become something less than believable; almost dissolving into a mute foil to the "struggle" within Mr. B., Pamela appears to be only a mere, if necessary, decoration

in what is essentially Mr. B.'s novel.

Turning to the religious implications, Needham, apparently attempting to deal with the presence of so many references to Providence, first discusses its meaning and finally assesses its manifestations in different social classes. This section of the article is interesting and should be cited in full.

> From their [Pamela and Mr. B.'s] conflicting values Richardson draws the novel's basic themes and thereby ensures their development in close integration with character and action. The themes show Richardson no radical reformer but a reflector of middle-class standards of current Christian morality and contemporary ethical thought. Overriding all other ideas is the belief that people should trust in God and his Providence to protect them and to reward, "in his own time," honesty and integrity. This sentiment unfortunately is shortened in the subtitle to "Virtue Rewarded" which, in conjunction with the heroine's name, has led too easily to interpretation only in its special narrow sense and to its association solely with Pamela. Subsidiary themes rely on Nature's Law as well as Divine Law and some echo Pope's Essay on Man: an individual's evaluation depends on his inner worth, not on rank or riches; virtue is humble, pride vain; the more riches a man has, the greater must be his benevolent actions for social good; marriages should be based on love. Each man "a link in Nature's chain," should perform his allotted duty:
>
> > Honour and shame from no condition rise;
> > Act well your part, there all the honour lies.
>
> Unfortunately, as the novel demonstrates, what is honour and what is shame hold different meanings for the social classes in general and for Mr. B. and Pamela in particular, differences which generate error and conflict that demand change or compromise before reconciliation and tranquility can be assured (451).

The references to Providence and Pope, while relevant and correct as far as they go, are somewhat negated, it seems to me, by Needham's failure to examine the religious implications of the sub-title. Perhaps because of her view that most misreadings of Pamela are owing to the "utilitarian Puritan code of morality" supposedly suggested by the sub-title, she fails to consider the view of the eighteenth century, a view

held by many orthodox Anglican divines, regarding the significance of a "Virtue Rewarded." Richardson's sub-title is not to be taken casually or viewed as a "false issue," for the "reward" of virtue was viewed as both proof of the existence of God and His concern for the welfare of His creatures, as is evident in the writings of numerous Anglican divines, particularly in John Wilkins's The Principles and Duties of Natural Religion, where he asks: "What could be a greater disparagement to divine Providence, than to permit the Calamities and Sufferings which good Men undergo in this World, many times upon the account of religion, to pass unrewarded; and the many Mischiefs and Prophanations, which wicked Men take the advantage of committing by their Greatness and Prosperity in this World to go unpunished?"[25] Needham's greatest complaint against the sub-title, however, appears to be that it can be suggestive of a certain "crassness" which has led readers to the conclusion that "personal" gain may be derived from the preservation of something which should remain separate from earthly or bodily concerns. However much a problem this may be for modern critics, in the terms of the eighteenth century "virtue" and personal security were not necessarily mutually exclusive concepts. As John Balguy states: "I think, it plainly appears, that aiming at private Welfare is not inconsistent with real Virtue; but when rightly circumstantiated, productive of it."[26]

In general, I do not see that Richardson's sub-title leads a reader to a narrow interpretation of virtue, presumably the one exhibited in Shamela or in the other "anti-Pamela" works; rather, as I suggested earlier, it is perhaps the reader who, cut off as he is in our day from the rich tradition of religious polemic and apologetic literature of the Renaissance and Eighteenth Century, fails to see beyond the "lily-white

standard" or "red flag" of a "Virtue Rewarded" in this world to the broader implications of such an event within a Christian world order. While Needham is right in emphasizing Providence as an important aspect of the novel's theme, failure to examine it any more than she does implies that its presence is somewhat less than central to the novel's meaning. Further evidence that she perhaps does not understand the implications of the sub-title or of Providence as it appears in Pamela, is her statement that, "Considering the critical debate over the subtitle, 'Virtue Rewarded,' surprisingly few readers have noted the complete absence in the novel of its natural corollary (according to popular Christian belief and to poetic justice)--Vice Punished" (472). While there is never an insistence by contemporary critics that these two "corollaries" of poetic justice[27] need always exist side by side, even in Pamela I would offer, as a balance to Needham's view that only virtue is rewarded, the suffering and death of Mrs. Jewkes,[28] the shame of "honest" John Arnold, and finally the sincere guilt, sorrow, and repentance of Mr. B. himself. The major problem, it seems to me, with Needham's arguments, as well as those of Sharrock and Bell, is that they give the reader a distorted view of the basic theme of Pamela: by concentrating on bits and pieces of the Christian elements found in Richardson's work, such critics run the risk of losing sight of the novel's overriding theme. That this theme is "providential" remains to be demonstrated, but I think that by correctly understanding how Providence, in many ways the single most important theological concept and concern of the age, works in Pamela, all the contingent religious elements can be seen in context as serving a larger purpose: as proof of the existence of a good and omnipotent God, as fictive counterparts of the presence of a Divine

Power working in and through man and nature to protect and reward struggling virtue. Without correctly understanding this larger concern, no true appraisal of Richardson's achievement as a novelist is possible.

NOTES

Chapter One

[1]Unless otherwise indicated, I will be using the Riverside Edition of Pamela, taken from the First Edition and edited by T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971); hereafter cited in text.

[2]Sir Charles Grandison, six vols. (Oxford: Shakespeare Head, 1931), I, viii; hereafter cited in text.

[3]For a valuable discussion of Richardson's "Christianity" see John A. Dussinger's "Richardson's 'Christian Vocation,'" Papers in Language and Literature, 3, 1 (Winter, 1967), 3-19, especially page 18 where he states that "From the evidence of his whole career as master printer, editor, compiler, correspondent, and novelist, Richardson's direct involvement with the religious movements of his time appears suggestive, and any interpretation of his novels from an historical perspective needs to take into account the impact of these events." Richardson's belief in Christianity and its appearance in his work was frequently acknowledged in his own day, as evidenced by Johannes Stinstra's statement relating that a friend of his had said of Clarissa that "he doubted not, but that if very many parts of these letters were to be found in the Bible, they would be pointed out as manifest proofs of divine inspiration." The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson, Ed., Anna Laetitia Barbauld, six vols. (London: R. Phillips, 1804), I, 242; hereafter referred to as Correspondence. There are numerous references by Richardson himself to his religious beliefs, such as his statement to Lady Bradshaigh that from his youth he "was a church-man, who had a profound reverence for the apostles, St. Paul in particular." Correspondence, VI, 206. Despite admissions of Richardson's Christianity, however, there still persists a general confusion over such things as his "moral" position and his ties to Deism or Utilitarianism. Cf. Joseph Texte, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the Cosmopolitan Spirit in Literature, translated by J.W. Matthews (London: Duckworth, 1899), p. 195; and James R. Foster, History of the Pre-Romantic Novel in England (New York: MLA Monograph Series, 17, 1949), p. 106.

[4]A great deal of attention has been paid to the Christian elements in Clarissa. For some interesting appraisals see John A. Dussinger's "Richardson's Tragic Muse," PQ, XLVI, 1 (1967), 18-33, and his "Conscience and the Pattern of Christian Perfection in Clarissa," PMLA, LXXXI, 3 (June, 1966), 236-245; Allan Wendt's "Clarissa's Coffin," PQ, XXXIX, 4 (Oct., 1960), 481-495; and Robert M. Schmitz's "Death and Colonel Morden in Clarissa," The South Atlantic Quarterly, LXIX, 3 (Summer, 1970), 346-353.

[5]See Ira Konigsberg, Samuel Richardson and the Dramatic Novel (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968).

[6]See Morris Golden, Richardson's Characters (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963).

[7]An example of this is "Richardson's 'Christian Vocation'" in which Dussinger, after granting that Richardson "is at pains to demonstrate the operations of divine grace and the direct intervention of Providence to reward the virtuous and punish the vicious in this world", goes on to state that this attempt fails "when Pamela, giddy over the prospect of wealth and station, suddenly consents to marry one who shortly before was pictured as little more than a bungling rapist" (p. 11). Dussinger offers little evidence from the novel as a basis for these assertations, and further clouds the issue by emphasizing that it is Pamela's "vicarious atonement" for Mr. B.'s sins that ultimately "wins a heartfelt conversion of the sinner" (pp. 11, 12). His lack of supporting evidence makes Dussinger's insights difficult to accept, especially when it is noted that the idea of "atonement" in Pamela is not so straight-forward or "pat" as he suggests. Cf. pp. 227, 285, 365, and 372 of the Riverside Edition; especially interesting is page 368, where Mr. B. warns Pamela not to assume that her "Interposition" is "sufficient to atone for the Faults of others."

[8]See Bernard Kreissman, Pamela-Shamela. A Study of the Criticisms, Burlesques, Parodies, and Adaptations of Richardson's Pamela (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960). There generally has been more work done on the religious and even providential elements in Fielding's novels than on the novels of Richardson. For example, see Martin C. Battestin's The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1959); James A. Work's "Henry Fielding, Christian Censor," pp. 139-148 of The Age of Johnson: Essays Presented to Chauncey Brewster Tinker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964, c. 1949), ed., Frederick W. Hilles; Allan Wendt's "The Moral Allegory in Jonathan Wild," ELH, XXIV, 24 (1957), 306-320; William Park's "Fielding and Richardson," PMLA, LXXXI, 5 (October, 1966), 381-388; Eric Rothstein's "The Framework of Shamela," ELH, 35, 3 (Sept., 1968), 381-402; Howard D. Weinbrot's "Chastity and Interpolation: Two Aspects of Joseph Andrews," JEGP, LXIX, 1 (Jan., 1970), 14-31; two recent articles dealing specifically with the implications of Providence in Fielding's novels are: Martin C. Battestin's "Tom Jones: The Argument of Design," in The Augustan Milieu. Essays Presented to Louis A. Landa, eds., Henry Knight Miller, Eric Rothstein, and G.S. Rousseau (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), pp. 289-319; and Aubrey L. Williams's "Interpositions of Providence and the Design of Fielding's Novels," SAQ, LXX, 1 (Spring, 1971), 265-286. Since these articles deal almost entirely with Fielding, I shall not discuss them at length except to say that Battestin's statements about Providence are somewhat ambiguous. Emphasizing as he does its importance in fiction which presents a "comedic" view of life, he neglects to deal adequately with it as a theological concept present and viable in all types of literature during the period. Further, he states that the "happy ending of Pamela is unacceptable because the novel asks to be taken as a faithful (even in a pious sense) representation of actuality" (p. 317). If this is the case with Pamela, it is difficult for me to see how one is to

take the equally "happy" endings of all of Fielding's novels. On the religious level, Battestin neglects to demonstrate how such a concept as Providence, with its contingent theories of "reward" and "punishment" frequently occurring in this life, does not represent "actuality". It is also difficult to see how one can grant, as Battestin apparently does, the significance of Providence as structural device in Fielding without equally granting its significance in Richardson. William's article, however, a continuation of the critical position found in two of his previous articles ["Congreve's Incognita and the Contrivances of Providence," in Imagined Worlds: Essays on Some English Novels and Novelists in Honour of John Butt, eds., Maynard Mack and Ian Gregor (London: Methuen, 1968), pp. 3-18; and "Poetical Justice, the Contrivances of Providence, and the Works of William Congreve," ELH, XXXV (Dec., 1968), 54-65] offers a better interpretation of Providence in Fielding's works. My discussion of the theme of Pamela is indebted to Williams's approach to both Congreve and Fielding, and, as will become evident later in this study, Richardson's fictive world view, like Congreve's and Fielding's, is definitely a providential one.

[9]Five Masters. A Study in the Mutations of the Novel (1930; rpt. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959), p. 131.

[10]"Richardson's Novels and Their Influence," Essays and Studies, II, (1911), p. 41.

[11]The Durham University Journal (March, 1966), p. 70; hereafter cited in text.

[12]In general, Sharrock thinks that both Defoe and Richardson were writing in opposition to the previously dominant "epic tradition" which they believed imposed a false standard of decorum on literature. See p. 71.

[13]Sharrock offers as evidence such works as the Mystère d' Adam and the Wakefield Second Shepherds' Play (70). The lengthy dominance of the "classical principle of noble themes and lofty style" he credits to the fact that the "classics became accepted by the church as the basis of formal education" (71).

[14]For Sharrock the "psychological analysis" (73) of a "single human heart" (74).

[15]Shakespeare Head Edition, IV, p. 187. Not all critics view Richardson as being "Puritan" in religion or tradition. See Diana Spearman, The Novel and Society (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1966), pp. 191-193. Richardson himself appeared to have a "tolerant" outlook on different religions. See the Italian-Catholic episodes in Sir Charles Grandison, and V, pp. 245, 246 of that novel. Despite this tolerance, however, none of the major characters shows signs of supporting "enthusiasm" in any form. For example, the following passage from Vol. V, in which Harriet Byron writes: "Am I a prude, my dear? In the odious sense of the abused word, I am sure I am not: But in the best sense, as derived from prudence, and used in opposition to a word that denotes a worse character, I own myself one of those who would wish to restore it to its natural respectable signification, for the sake of virtue; which, as Sir Charles himself once hinted (Vol. III, p. 381), is in danger of suffering, by the abuse of it; as Religion once did, by that of the word Puritan" (183).

[16]PQ, XLIX, 1 (Jan., 1970), p. 100; hereafter cited in text.

[17]Bell cites pages 148 and 161 of Watt's The Rise of the Novel in establishing the basic premise of his article.

[18]Bell's citation, a telescoping of a rather lengthy passage into four lines, contains the following: "Indeed, sir, said I, I cannot go, till you pardon me, which I beg on my bended knees. I am truly sorry for my boldness...Judge for me, sir, and pardon me. Pardon you! said he, What! when you don't repent?--When you have the boldness to justify yourself in your fault? (220)" The emphasis is Bell's.

It is interesting to note that this passage, one of the first which shows Mr. B.'s beginning "reformation," also contains this statement by Pamela, deleted by Bell: "I am truly sorry for my boldness.--But I see how you go on: you creep by little and little upon me; and now soothe me, and now threaten me; and if I should forbear to shew my resentment, when you offer incivilities to me, would not that be to be lost by degrees? Would it not shew, that I would bear any thing from you, if I did not express all the indignation I could express, at the first approaches you make to what I dread" (Norton Edition, p. 220). This statement, alluding as it does to numerous Biblical passages advising man to "fly" the occasion of sin and temptation (cf. Proverbs 4.14-15; I Timothy 6.11; II Timothy 2.22), is even more "theologically charged" than the sentences emphasized by Bell.

[19]Bell uses the Norton Edition of Pamela, ed. William M. Sale, Jr. (New York, 1958). For a discussion of the unreliability of this text, among others, see T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, "Richardson's Revisions of Pamela," SB, XX (1957), 61-68.

[20]Dussinger sees the "perfectionist hero" as a "mirror of Christ's vicarious sacrifice." "Richardson's 'Christian Vocation'", p. 11.

[21]Pamela, Norton Edition, p. 36.

[22]Pamela, Riverside Edition, pp. 49, 50; I think that part of Bell's difficulty arises from his acceptance of the generally inferior Norton Edition. Given the textual problems arising from the numerous later editions of Pamela, it is imperative to check all citations against the First Edition.

[23]"Richardson's Characterization of Mr. B. and Double Purpose in Pamela," Eighteenth-Century Studies, 3, 4 (Summer, 1970), p. 436; hereafter cited in text.

[24]As Needham sees it: "The nature of the personal and larger conflicts inherent in the plot presents in varying degrees both moral and social dilemmas to the main characters and a double purpose--moral and social--to the author and his novel. Furthermore, the two dilemmas and dual purpose are inseparable, the importance of which fact some critics have not sufficiently realized. As a moralist, Richardson must show that mutual love in the marriage between his reclaimed rake and virtuous servant makes their union come near to the Protestant ideal of matrimony (now accepted in theory, if not in practice). As a realist, Richardson will

seek to demonstrate that this particular marriage is a justifiable exception to the practical matrimonial criteria set by society for approved matches" (438, 439).

[25](London, 1734), p. 153.

[26]The Foundation of Moral Goodness (1st ed., 1728). From British Moralists. Being Selections from Writers Principally of the Eighteenth Century, ed., L.A. Selby-Bigge, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1897), I, p. 100. In his correspondence, June 28, 1754, with Johannes Stinstra, Dutch translator of Clarissa, Richardson relays an answer by Mr. Duncombe pertaining to Stinstra's "Observations on Balguy's Tracts, &c.": "Mr. Balguy has been dead some Years. His Son, a Clergyman of Learning and Genius, was lately fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge." The Richardson-Stinstra Correspondence and Stinstra's Prefaces to Clarissa, ed., William C. Slattery (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 1969), pp. 82, 83; hereafter cited as Slattery. Richardson also printed Balguy's A Collection of Tracts Moral and Theological, 1734. William M. Sale, Jr., Samuel Richardson: Master Printer (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950), p. 148. Sale's book is invaluable because it includes an appended list of the books published and printed by Richardson.

[27]The device whereby literary men in the Restoration and Eighteenth Century attempted to approximate in their writings the Divine Justice and Providential Order believed to exist in the world. See Thomas Rymer's The Tragedies of the Last Age Consider'd and Examin'd by the Practice of the Ancients, and by the Common Sense of All Ages, in a Letter to Fleetwood Shepheard, Esq (1677), and John Dennis's The Usefulness of the Stage, to the Happiness of Mankind, to Government, and to Religion. Occasioned by a Late Book, written by Jeremy Collier, M.A. (1698). See also Richard H. Tyre's "Versions of Poetic Justice in the Early Eighteenth Century," SP, 54 (1957), pp. 29-44. For Tyre, "Both Addison and Dennis came to see poetic justice as a necessary literary recognition of the divine order controlling men's destinies" (44).

[28]See vol. II of the Everyman Edition of Pamela, ed. M. Kinkead-Weekes (London: Dent, 1963), pp. 46-48, 351-352. In this study I am not dealing with the sequel, Pamela II, but rather with the original story, primarily because I think that Pamela's character, as well as the major portrayal of Mr. B., stands complete at the end of the first part.

CHAPTER TWO

The Christian Canon of Richardson

Part of the trouble in reassessing Richardson's accomplishment seems to lie in the difficulty most present-day readers have with the very term "Christianity." In our own time, it appears to be a source of embarrassment for critics even to use the terms "Christian" or "Christianity" in a serious analysis of a literary work. Substitute words are plentiful: "moral vision" and "ethos", and appelatives such as "Puritan," continue to serve critics, especially those endeavoring to get around what they see as a "failing" in Richardson, an eccentric primness or prudery in an author otherwise of classic significance to the development of the novel. Morality and ethics, however, are not synonyms for Christianity. Despite the fact that ethics and morality, and subsidiary concepts such as "honor," may be important for the preservation of the "good" in society, they are no more equivalent to the basic doctrines of the Gospels, than Puritanism is to the major thrust of English Christianity. Along with many divines in the Renaissance, Restoration, and Eighteenth Century, Richardson himself insists on the distinction between "morality" and "religion." Toward the end of Pamela II,[1] Pamela writes to her parents of her former wishes regarding Mr. B.'s progress:

> There was but one thing wanting to complete all the happiness I wished for in this life; which was, the remote hope I had entertained, that one day, my dear Mr. B. who from a licentious gentleman became a moralist, would be so touched by the divine grace, as to become in time, more than moral, a religious man, and, at last join in the duties he had the goodness to countenance (420).

Further on in the same letter, Mr. B. asks Pamela, "Is there not, my Pamela, a text, That the unbelieving husband shall be saved by the believing wife, whilst he beholds her chaste conversation coupled with fear?" (422). Upon her affirmative answer, he states:

> Then, my dear, I begin to hope that will be my case; for, from a former affair, of which this spot of ground puts me more in mind, I see so much reason to doubt my own strength, which I had built, and, as I thought securely, on moral foundations, that I must look out for a better guide to conduct me, than the proud word honour can be, in the general acceptance of it among us lively young gentlemen (422).

Following this, Mr. B. speaks directly of what he sees as central to his progress:

> But I depended too much upon my own strength: and I am now convinced, that nothing but RELIGIOUS CONSIDERATIONS, and a resolution to watch over the very first appearances of evil, and to check them as they arise, can be of sufficient weight to keep steady to his good purpose, a vain young man, too little accustomed to restraint, and too much used to play upon the brink of dangers, from a temerity, and love of intrigue, natural to enterprising minds (423).

This distinction between the "moral" man and the "Religious," the "Christian" man,[2] is insisted upon again in Clarissa.[3] In the "Author's Preface," speaking of the libertines who appear in the book, Richardson states that they are not "infidels or scoffers, nor yet such as think themselves freed from the observance of those other moral duties which bind man to man" (I, xiii). Thus, between Lovelace and his companions, "Morality" is almost a social "cement," a code of behavior which is necessary to prevent anarchy and civil dissolution. Between Clarissa and Anna Howe, however, it is not this kind of "morality" which predominates, but rather a "friendship, between minds endowed with the noblest principles of virtue and religion" (I, xiii), a friendship dependent less

upon a code of "social" behavior than upon a belief in the "religious" order which supercedes such a code. Thus, by Volume Six of Sir Charles Grandison (a novel in which generally accepted concepts of "honour" and "moral" behavior serve almost as foils to the correct religious standards of Sir Charles) when Harriet Byron says, "But Sir Charles, madam, is a Christian!" (40), the word itself can be taken as a concise summation and evaluation of Sir Charles's character within the novel.

I have dwelt at some length upon the importance of the word "Christian," for purposes of noting the confusion created by a critic who, even though granting the significance of Christianity or religion in Richardson's novels, lumps all "spiritual" sounding words together and thinks he still is speaking to the point. To argue that Richardson's novels are "Christian," one should be concerned primarily not just with the individual "prudential" or "ethical" or "moral" aspects of them, but rather with the more comprehensive "religious" world view upon which they are patterned. They are to be seen, moreover, as well within the mainstream of a traditional English Christianity, an outgrowth and development of an earlier Roman Catholic tradition, a body of doctrine and thought stretching itself from St. Paul to Edward Young, an ideology manifesting itself in England not just on the theological level but also on the literary level from Chaucer to Alexander Pope.[4] And since Richardson's novels also mirror the religious world view of the age in which they were written, with "Providence" forming their most important thematic concept, demonstration here of the prevalence of providential language and situation within Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison can serve to show that its prevalence in Pamela is somehow central rather than incidental to the design and meaning of Richardson's first novel.

Early in Clarissa, and at a time when James and Arabella Harlowe are methodically forcing an acceptance of Solmes as proof of Clarissa's indifference to Lovelace, she remembers Dr. Lewen's advice of "Steadiness of mind" (I, 93) when one is convinced of being absolutely in the right, and, after mulling over the implications such counsel holds for her present situation, writes to Anna Howe:

> So, my dear, were we perfect (which no one can be), we could not be happy in this life, unless those with whom we have to deal (those more especially who have any control upon us) were governed by the same principles. But then does not the good doctor's conclusion recur—that we have nothing to do but to choose what is right; to be steady in the pursuit of it; and to leave the issue to Providence?
>
> This, if you approve of my motives (and if you don't, pray inform me), must be my aim in the present case (I, 94).

A little later in the first volume, following Lovelace's woodhouse appearance and the ever-increasing harshness of her relatives, the result of her seeming obstinacy, Clarissa, in a letter to her brother (really designed to reach her parents), says of the proposed meeting with Solmes: "Let Mr. Solmes come and go, as my papa pleases: let me but stay or retire when he comes, as I can; and leave the rest to Providence" (I, 261). Shortly after the disastrous meeting with Solmes, and in the face of threats to carry her to her Uncle Anthony's, Clarissa questions the apparent whimsicalness of her present situation:

> O my dear! what is worldly wisdom but the height of folly? I, the meanest, at least the youngest, of my father's family, to thrust myself in the gap between such uncontrollable spirits!—to the interception perhaps of the designs of Providence, which may intend to make these hostile spirits their own punishers (I, 413).

A few pages later, and in a similarly contemplative mood, Clarissa questions: "Who knows what the justice of Heaven may inflict, in order to convince us that we are not out of the reach of misfortune; and to

reduce us to a better reliance, than we have hitherto presumptuously made?" (I, 419). Writing from St. Albans following her flight, Clarissa describes to Anna Howe the arguments used by Lovelace to persuade her to leave with him. During this debate, Lovelace lets fall threats against the safety of her family if Solmes should be the man, and Clarissa retorts: "To Providence, Mr. Lovelace, and to the law, will I leave the safety of my friends. You shall not threaten me into a rashness that my heart condemns! Shall I, to promote your happiness, as you call it, destroy all my future peace of mind?" (I, 479).

From even these few examples an insistent theme is visible in the novel.[5] Clarissa, following an initial refusal to abide by the dictates of her parents[6] and an initial wavering in her decision to follow the advice of Dr. Lewen, is progressively attacked from all sides; pressured by vindictive and well-meaning relatives alike, and entreated and importuned by a "lover" who in many ways, through the use of such agents as Joseph Leman within the Harlowe family, is able to prod them all at will, resulting in continual upset and turmoil; and she is on numerous occasions left defenseless save for a pious "hope" that somehow, some way, God, through His "Providence," will effectively support her in the time of her trouble. Once she has physically left the protection of her parents, moreover, Clarissa indeed faces seemingly invincible opponents: Lovelace himself, almost "Satanic" in his characterization, a man knowing the good and yet unwilling to amend himself sufficiently to do the good;[7] Madam Sinclair and her prostitutes; and the world itself, London in particular, a place of whores and pimps and cutthroats far removed from the quiet garden of Harlowe Place and the serenity of the Dairy House. Nevertheless, Clarissa not only endures but becomes by the time of her death not

an object of pity but an example, a very special instance, of the permanence of the good and the active and continual concern of God for suffering virtue. However innocent in comparison to a Lovelace or Sinclair, Clarissa is aware continually that leaving her parents' house was a rash and even "prideful" action.[8] However forced and buffeted by her relatives, she sees herself as wrong to flee, to act in a way contrary to "the designs of Providence," and in Volume Two she anticipates with faith much of what does in fact happen in the coming months: "Since it is now too late to look back, let me collect all my fortitude and endeavour to stand those shafts of angry Providence which it will not permit me to shun! That whatever the trials may be which I am destined to undergo, I may not behave unworthily in them, but come out amended by them" (168). There is now no garden-gate through which to fly the trials awaiting her, only a growing necessity to "choose what is right; to be steady in the pursuit of it; and to leave the issue to Providence."

It is not my purpose to examine each instance where Providence is alluded to by Clarissa or the other characters, or where events occur which find their counterpart in the sermon and homiletic literature of the age.[9] Clarissa time and again comments upon her progress, present state of affairs, and future hopes, by linking them to the purposes of Heaven, the "plan" which only God can see clearly. For example, she states to Lovelace following the rape and her first meeting thereafter with him: "Great and good God of Heaven...give me patience to support myself under the weight of those afflictions, which Thou, for wise and good ends, though at present impenetrable by me, hast permitted" (III, 232). More pertinent to an understanding of the significance of Providence in the novel, however, is Clarissa's death and the letters subsequently delivered to

all the principals involved in her story.

The profound suffering of a young girl, presented throughout the novel as almost a paragon of the Christian virtues, stirred in Richardson's own time some rather passionate and interesting responses. Richardson was advised by Mrs. Pilkington, that when Colley Cibber heard that Clarissa must die, he said, "G_d d__n him, if she should; and that he should no longer believe Providence, or eternal Wisdom, or Goodness governed the world, if merit, innocence, and beauty were to be destroyed: nay (added he) my mind is so hurt with the thought of her being violated, that were I to see her in Heaven, sitting on the knees of the blessed Virgin, and crowned with glory, her suffering would still make me feel horror, horror distilled."[10] Richardson himself, however, answering Lady Bradshaigh's repeated desire that Clarissa be rewarded in this world, emphasizes what he was trying to depict in his novel thus:

> A writer who follows nature, and pretends to keep the Christian system in his eye, cannot make a heaven in this world for his favourites, or represent this life otherwise than as a state of probation. Clarissa, I once more aver, could not be rewarded in this world. To have given her her reward here, as in a happy marriage, would have been as if a poet had placed his catastrophe in the third act of his play, when the audience were obliged to expect two more. What greater moral proof can be given of a world after this, for the rewarding of suffering, and for the punishing of oppressive vice, than the inequalities in the distribution of rewards and punishments here below?[11]

That Richardson kept "the Christian system in his eye" further appears evident if the various letters Clarissa entrusts Belford to send in the event of her death are examined carefully. She says to Belford himself, whose spiritual growth stands in direct contrast to Lovelace's progressive hardness of heart, "let me hope that I may be a humble instrument in the hands of Providence, to reform a man of your abilities" (IV, 355); she pleads with her brother to "Leave, then, the poor wretch

[Lovelace] to the Divine justice" (IV, 362); and she admonishes and prophetically warns Lovelace himself to "lose no time. Set about your repentance instantly. Be no longer the instrument of Satan, to draw poor souls into those subtile snares, which at last shall entangle your own feet" (IV, 437). But, it is the letter to her Uncles, John and Antony, that reveals the best insight into her progress, indeed the major instance of her perception of the significance of Providence. Despite its length, it should be cited in full:

> The ways of Providence are unsearchable. Various are the means made use of by it, to bring poor sinners to a sense of their duty. Some are drawn by love, others are driven by terrors, to their Divine refuge. I had for eighteen years out of nineteen rejoiced in the favour and affection of every one. No trouble came near my heart. I seemed to be one of those designed to be drawn by the silken cords of love. But perhaps I was too apt to value myself upon the love and favour of every one: the merit of the good I delighted to do, and of the inclinations which were given me, and which I could not help having, I was, perhaps, too ready to attribute to myself; and now, being led to account for the cause of my temporary calamities, find I had a secret pride to be punished for, which I had not fathomed: and it was necessary perhaps that some sore and terrible misfortunes should befall me, in order to mortify that my pride and that my vanity.
>
> Temptations were accordingly sent. I shrunk in the day of trial. My discretion, which had been so cried up, was found wanting when it came to be weighed in an equal balance. I was betrayed, fell, and became the byword of my companions, and a disgrace to my family, which had prided itself in me perhaps too much. But as my fault was not that of a culpable will, when my pride was sufficiently mortified, I was not suffered (although surrounded by dangers, and entangled in snares) to be totally lost: but purified by sufferings, I was fitted for this change I have NOW, at the time you will receive this, so newly, and, as I humbly hope, so happily experienced (IV, 364-365).

This letter marks the high point of Clarissa's self-awareness. It is "Providence" which she now believes to have been at work in the world through which she has journeyed,[12] a force intricately linked to the recent events in her life. Man's goal, exemplified by Clarissa herself,

is to arrive at a "Divine refuge" in spite of the dangers, trials, and temptations to which the human condition is prone. There is no escaping the trials of life, no garden-gate leading to a better world, and the best anyone can expect is a death similar to Clarissa's, full of hope and quiet trust in a God whose mercy and justice, love and wrath, concern and guidance are visibly present in the world, and who uses various "Instruments" to draw men to Him, yet always allowing a freedom of will in the creatures He created and sustains.[13] Clarissa, as this letter shows, is not purged of an adolescent "vanity" or a feminine "coyness," but rather of a potentially dangerous belief, born in the safety of a sequestered life, in her own unwavering goodness and purity, a belief which she almost equated with proof of salvation. The "merit" given her by others was merely accepted as her just due, unearned, and believed to be further proof of her value without the need to preserve and exercise, actively and continually, each day, the fragile "virtue," the precarious "goodness" found in all men. She has, by the time of her death, taken the warnings of God, read aright the workings of Providence in the world, and can be said to be in a good way toward salvation. Her ultimate "choices" were correct ones, and her final "reward" is left to God.

The Divine warnings, the "ways of Providence" at work in the world, which Clarissa takes to heart, are lost on Lovelace. While she attains self-knowledge from her sufferings, he progressively hardens his heart.[14] The death of Sinclair, and Belford's vivid description of her last hours, do little to force Lovelace into an admission of the heinousness of his actions. Following Clarissa's death, he "raves" for a time, but his pride remains unshakable. Clarissa's last letter to him explicitly describes what he can expect if, by his continued wickedness, he "multiplys" his "offenses" and refuses to beg forgiveness of God. In a passage

telescoping Job 18 and 20, Clarissa warns that:

> The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment. He is cast into a net by his own feet—he walketh upon a snare. Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet. His strength shall be hunger-bitten, and destruction shall be ready at his side. The first-born of death shall devour his strength. His remembrance shall perish from the earth; and he shall have no name in the streets. He shall be chased out of the world. He shall have neither son nor nephew among his people. They that have seen him shall say, Where is he? He shall fly away as a dream: he shall be chased away as a vision of the night. His meat is the gall of asps within him. He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through. A fire not blown shall consume him. The heaven shall reveal his iniquity, and the earth shall rise up against him. The worm shall feed sweetly on him. He shall be no more remembered. This is the fate of him that knoweth not God (IV, 437).

Even this graphic and prophetic statement fails to cause Lovelace to leave his pride. In his next letter to Belford, he appears as a man "suffering" yet steadfast in his refusal to submit to a power greater than his own:

> I have been in a cursed way. Methinks something has been working strangely retributive. I never was such a fool as to disbelieve a Providence; yet am I not for resolving into judgments everything that seems to wear an avenging face. Yet if we must be punished either here or hereafter for our misdeeds, better <u>here</u>, say I, than <u>hereafter</u>. Have I not then an interest to think my punishment already not only begun, but completed; since what I have suffered, and do suffer, passes all description? (IV, 438).

Although Lovelace continually laments the death of Clarissa, it appears to be an essentially "selfish" lamentation. He even repents this letter to Belford and states that "I own not that I am still excessively grieved at the disappointment this admirable woman made it so much her whimsical choice to give me. But, since it has thus fallen out; since she was determined to leave the world; and since she actually ceases <u>to be</u>; ought I, who have such a share of life and health in hand, to

indulge gloomy reflections upon an event that is past; and being past, cannot be recalled?" (IV, 442).

Ultimately it is his progressive egoistic selfishness, whereby Lovelace closes his ears to the warnings of Providence and hardens his heart in response to the first stirrings of conscience, that causes his destruction. Belford pleads with him shortly before his departure for Europe: "if you do not quickly reform, it will be out of your power to reform at all; and that Providence, which has already given you the fates of your agents Sinclair and Tomlinson to take warning by, will not let the principal offender escape, if he slight the warning" (IV, 449). Lovelace, however, turns this warning into a source for mirth, and chides Belford for indulging in "the dismal and the horrible" at the expense of "gaiety" (IV, 450). The examples of Lovelace's refusal to heed the warnings of Providence following the death of Clarissa are numerous, and eventually Clarissa's prophecy is fulfilled when he literally is "cast into a net by his own feet" and killed by Colonel Morden in a duel inadvertently brought about by a "conscience-ridden" letter from his former tool, Joseph Leman, stating that the Colonel vowed "to have his will" of him (IV, 515).[15] His pride, so manifest in his retorts to the sincere admonishments of Belford, causes him to meet the Colonel and subsequently receive a mortal wound at his hands. His last words, "LET THIS EXPIATE" (IV, 530), especially when joined with his earlier refusal to heed the warnings of Providence, are evidence not of a sincere repentance, but again rather of a pride which causes him to <u>demand</u> that his death be acceptable as an "atonement" for the suffering and death of Clarissa.[16] Unlike Clarissa, Lovelace dies in selfishness and pride, a man "hoist on his own petard,"[17] and an example for others of the providential justice which many divines saw manifesting itself against the wicked

frequently in this life, but most assuredly in the next.[18]

While not as insistent as Clarissa upon overt providential control, Sir Charles Grandison nevertheless presents a fictive world view patterned upon a "real world" belief in the Providence of God.[19] The major "plot" proceeds by way of the long and elaborate courtship of Harriet Byron, and not until late in the novel is it certain that she and Sir Charles will wed. The prime obstacles to their marriage comprise the "sub-plot" and derive from two different sets of circumstances: the prior "engagement" of Sir Charles to an Italian gentlewoman, Lady Clementina, and the ever-present danger posed to both Sir Charles and Harriet by various rakes, most notably Sir Hargrave Pollexfen. The Clementina "problem," a result of Sir Charles's rescuing the scion of a wealthy Italian family and being accepted into their confidence, involves conflicts of both religion and nationality. The Lady comes dangerously close to insanity in an attempt to reconcile her Roman Catholic heritage with the Protestantism of Sir Charles, causing Sir Charles in turn to agonize, after his return to England, over the irreconcilability of honoring a prior commitment and his growing love for Harriet. The machinations of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, ranging from the abduction of Harriet to his attempts at forcing Sir Charles into a duel, provide the means whereby Sir Charles's essential character is revealed, and also reveal the futility of selfish and prideful behavior. The Clementina episodes, coupled with those involving Sir Hargrave, serve to heighten a picture of the world as "maze" or as a scene of baffling social twists and turns which make even the probable event uncertain of ever being realized. Sir Charles moves from crisis to crisis, arrives at critical times to save suffering innocence, and always attributes his success to a power greater than himself, wishing only to be "an humble instrument, in the hand of

Providence" (IV, 121). Unlike a Lovelace, finally hardened in sin and unwilling to repent, or a Mr. B., originally indulging his sinful desires and finally started on the path of salvation by the continuing example of a worthy woman, Sir Charles, instilled from childhood by his mother in "the first principles of Christianity" (I, 401), stands, from his initial appearance, as a mature "good" man and as an active agent for this "good" in a world too often excessively passionate and prone to civil dissolution as a result of various codes of "honour" which are little more than euphemisms for murder.[20]

The clearest statement of the world order by which Sir Charles Grandison is shaped comes in Volume Two when Dr. Bartlett shows the assembled company Emily Jervois's translation of the "Sonnet of Vincenzio de Filicaja":

> See a fond mother incircled by her children: With tenderness she looks around, and her soul even melts with maternal Love. One she kisses on the forehead; and clasps another to her bosom. One she sets upon her knee: and finds a seat upon her foot for another. And while, by their actions, their lisping words, and asking eyes, she understands their various numberless little wishes; to these she dispenses a look; a word to those; and whether she smiles or frowns 'tis all in tender Love.
>
> Such to us, tho' infinitely high and awful, is PROVIDENCE: So it watches over us; comforting these; providing for those; listening to all; assisting every one: And if sometimes it denies the favour we implore, it denies but to invite our more earnest prayers, or, seeming to deny a blessing, grants one in that refusal (222).

This translation, in many ways, describes what generally does happen in the novel. Providence, the active representation of the love, mercy, and justice of God, works in and through man and nature to govern, aid, and guide man according to a purpose not always immediately clear, but always finally equitable. As Providence, working in the world, is seen

"assisting every one", so periodically in the novel, momentum is carried by a number of timely "assists," events so extraordinary that to view them as mere "coincidence" is to make probability itself seem ludicrous. Here I shall examine three episodes which are representative of such "assists" and such larger concerns in Sir Charles Grandison: the Harriet-Pollexfen kidnap scene; the Danby story; and the later episode of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen in France.

The kidnapping of Harriet Byron from a masquerade by Sir Hargrave Pollexfen sets in motion a string of occurrences which lead to the first appearance of Sir Charles in the novel. Sir Hargrave uses Harriet's newly hired servant, one William Wilson, to arrange to carry her to the house of the Widow Awberry at Paddington. Once at Paddington, Sir Hargrave plans to force Harriet to marry him. The plot is put into effect, and, when Harriet stoutly resists the attempted marriage ceremony, calling the whole time upon God to protect her (I, 233), Sir Hargrave, finally afraid of her fits and screaming, forces her into his coach and starts for his Windsor seat. Soon thereafter, while wrapped in a cloak with her mouth and eyes bound, and feeling the coach stop, Harriet works the gag free and cries out, "Help, for God's sake" (I, 252). What follows is her rescue by Sir Charles Grandison, who, apparently by the sheerest of "chances," is riding near Hounslow. Later, however, Harriet says of the events leading up to her rescue: "Lord L. carried his Lady [Sir Charles's older sister] down to Scotland, where she was greatly admired and caressed by all his relations. How happy for your Harriet was their critically-proposed return, which carried down Sir Charles and Miss Charlotte to prepare every-thing at Colnebrooke for their reception" (II, 146). While this scene is not explicitly providential, the "critically-proposed return" of Lord and Lady L. which sets in motion

the equally "critical" arrival of Sir Charles at the exact time and place near Hounslow where he could be of service to a helpless woman, is nevertheless reminiscent of treatments of the workings of Divine Providence. During a sermon concerning the "Particular Providence" of God, Isaac Barrow, for example, asks his congregation "if, sometime or other, in their lives, they have not in their pressing needs and straits (especially upon their addresses to God for help) found help and comfort conveyed unto them by an insensible hand; if they have not sometimes in a manner unaccountable escaped imminent dangers; if they have not in the performance of their duty and devotion toward God experienced a comfort more than ordinary; if they cannot to some events of their life aptly [Ps. XXXIV.6, 7, 8; CXLV.18, 19] apply those observations of the Psalmist: This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and delivered him out of his troubles: The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them: O taste and see that the Lord is good. O taste and see."[21] When it is kept in mind that, for Barrow, one of the "characters" of the particular Providence of God was the "seasonableness and suddenness of events", when something occurred which was not probable "in the nick of an exigency, for the relief of innocence, the encouragement of goodness, the support of a good cause, the furtherance of any good purpose",[22] one may perhaps view Harriet's rescue by Sir Charles as something other than merely "fortuitous" or "coincidental." The fact that Harriet herself calls upon God for help and subsequently is rescued by a man who wishes to be "an humble instrument, in the hand of Providence" (IV, 121) may also lead one to conclude that this scene is only the first of many which, taken together, delineate a Christian world order in which the major characters exist.

The Danby story provides another example of the significance of Providence in the novel. Following the death of his friend Danby, Sir Charles in reading the will finds that he has been named executor and "residuary legatee" because he "had been the principal instrument in the hand of Providence, of saving his life" (II, 248). Later, after his noble treatment of Mr. Danby's two nephews and his niece, children of the very brother who it is soon learned had attempted to murder Danby, Sir Charles says to them: "Look upon what is done for you, not as the reward of any particular merits in yourselves, but as your debt to that Providence, which makes it a principal part of your religion, To do good to your fellow-creatures. In a word, let me enjoin you, in all your transactions, to remember mercy as well as justice" (II, 259). The story itself is told by Sir Charles later at a family gathering. Prompted by Lord L., Sir Charles tells how Danby, a thriving merchant settled at Cambray, was troubled by his profligate brother. Jealous of Danby's support of his three children and recent refusal to give him any more money, this brother plotted to murder Danby, and, because of the lack of a will, inherit his fortune. About this time Sir Charles visited Danby and was persuaded to spend a few days with him at his "villa in the Cambresis" (II, 439). Around midnight, Sir Charles was awakened by violent noises from Danby's bedchamber, and, drawing his sword, discovered a ruffian about to cut the throat of the helpless merchant. After a scuffle in which he seriously wounds one of the would-be assassins, and drives off the other two, Sir Charles revives Danby, and secures the wounded man, who soon confesses that it was Danby's brother who had hired them. Later, the "surviving villains," sentenced to the galleys, related that "they knew nothing of Mr. Danby's having a guest with him: If they

had, they owned they would have made their attempt another night" (II, 441). Thus, a "chance" acquaintance and a "propitious" time for a visit to a villa save the life of an innocent and worthy man, and later enable Sir Charles to execute both justice and mercy toward the equally innocent children of the man whose plot he had been able to foil.

To view this episode, brief as it is, as just another reiteration of the incredible "goodness" of Sir Charles is to miss the point, for the episode is typical of the general movement of the novel, which consists, in many ways, of a series of similar episodes. Whether physically saving Harriet or Danby or Jeronymo, whether spiritually salvaging Emily's mother and Major O'Hara or Everard Grandison, Sir Charles is always at the right place at the right time not because of any artistic naïveté on Richardson's part, but because he inhabits a fictive world which mirrors a real one in which an omnipotent and omniscient God rules, sustains, and frequently intervenes, using His creatures to correct a wrong or save a suffering innocence. Sir Charles acknowledges as much when he hopes to be "an humble instrument, in the hand of Providence", or when he states of himself at one point that "God only knows...what may be my destiny!--As generosity, as justice, or rather as Providence leads, I will follow" (IV, 9). One could wish himself to be such an instrument of Providence without any taint of moral "smugness," primarily because such "instruments" were thought not only to exist but to be essential for the continued well-being of all human existence. As Isaac Barrow, Henry Fielding's favorite divine, put it: "the instruments of Providence being free agents, acting with unaccountable variety, nothing can happen which may not be imputed to them with some colourable pretence. Divine and human influences are so twisted and knot together, that it is hard to sever them."[23] Sir Charles is continually "acting,"

continually engaging life, not passively riding with the whims of "fate" or "fortune," and in so doing he emerges indeed as a fit "instrument" of God.[24]

A final example of his "instrumentality" may be gathered from the occasion when Sir Charles and Dr. Lowther are stopped outside Paris by a terrified servant who states "that his master, who was an Englishman, and his friend of the same nation, had been a little while before attacked, and forced out of the road in their post-chaise, as he doubted not, to be murdered, by no less than seven armed horsemen" (IV, 80, 81). Noticing the servant's livery is that of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, traveling on the continent to "forget" his failure with Harriet Byron and "disgrace" in the attempted kidnapping, Sir Charles rushes to the scene where he finds two gentlemen being beaten unmercifully. The two "gentlemen" are Sir Hargrave and his companion, Mr. Merceda. After stopping the attack and helping the two bloody "victims" as much as possible, Sir Charles tries to determine its cause. It finally becomes apparent that Pollexfen, Merceda, and Bagenhall had "made a vile attempt...on a Lady's honour at Abbeville" (IV, 85), and that Bagenhall, guilty of seducing, on promise of marriage, a manufacturer's young daughter, had escaped with the father pursuing him. The demand that Pollexfen and Merceda kneel and ask pardon of the Lady's husband is met, and the two then "kneeled again to their deliverer, and poured forth blessings upon the man whose life, so lately, one of them sought; and whose preservation he had now so much reason to rejoice in, for the sake of his own safety" (IV, 87). The physician, Dr. Lowther, happily one of the best-skilled in England, presumably patches them up sufficiently for the Channel crossing.

That this rescue of Sir Hargrave is not merely an example of Sir Charles mechanically returning "good for evil," or yet another attempt by Richardson to raise to epic proportions his hero's "benevolence," is soon evident. Later in the novel, following Sir Charles's marriage to Harriet, a subdued Sir Hargrave, believing himself close to death, says to Sir Charles, "Great God!...how are you rewarded! How am I punished! Is there no hope that I have my punishment in this Life? I am sure, it is very, very heavy" (VI, 15, 16). At the time of his death Sir Hargrave says, "Fain...would I have been trusted with a few years trial of my penitence. I have wearied heaven with my prayers to this purpose. I deserved not perhaps that they should be heard. My conscience cruelly told me, that I have neglected a multitude of opportunities! slighted a multitude of warnings!--O Sir Charles Grandison! It is a hard, hard thing to die! In the prime of youth too!--Such noble possessions" (VI, 323, 324). Following this, Sir Hargrave warns his surrounding friends of the dangers of living such a life as his, compares his present unhappy end with the happiness of Sir Charles, and dies with Sir Charles comforting him and calling "out for mercy for him, when the poor man could only by expressive looks, join in the solemn invocation" (VI, 324). Thus, Sir Hargrave, unlike Lovelace, moves in the novel, as a direct result of Sir Charles Grandison (an acknowledged "instrument of Providence") from rake to a man at least on the way to true penitence, to one with a chance of obtaining "mercy" from God. His penitence at the end of his life, his provision for his relatives and charity toward the man who has won Harriet are not "sentimental" touches, but rather are reminiscent of the attempts by divines to deal with both the presence of evil and the seeming inequality of rewards and punishments in this world. However true it may be that an afterlife will finally rectify

unpunished wrongs, there is, as John Veneer pointed out, and Sir Hargrave represents, "another reason why God does not immediately punish wicked Men", and that is "that they may have time to become better; that his Goodness, as St. Paul expresseth himself, may lead them to Repentance. Rom.11.4."[25]

One of the conclusions to be drawn from this brief examination of Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison is that there is more to seemingly "improbable" or "accidental" events in contemporary literature than has been recognized. For too long, scholars have read such things as the lengthy survival of Clarissa's "chastity" while in the power of Lovelace and Sinclair, or the "timely" arrivals of Sir Charles Grandison, as examples of Richardson's naïveté in novelistic technique, a failing more than compensated for by his "sensitivity" to the feminine mind or the psychology of human "passion." Too often it is overlooked or simply ignored that these so-called "improbable," "accidental," or almost "fantastic" elements in his novels are so numerous and so carefully worked out that they emerge from any close reading as the essential components of the novel's design. The "world" of Richardson's novels is to my mind little different from the "real" world to which divines address themselves in sermon, tract and scriptural commentary. The concept of Providence is common, during the period, to literary and religious writer alike; indeed, at times, it is difficult to establish clear-cut distinctions between their individual uses and examinations of it.[26] I am not saying that, because of the religious implications of his work, Richardson, or any writer for that matter, was simply composing a theological tract. Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison are novels, literary works, and as such engage life through use of a form entirely different from that of a sermon or polemic. Despite this difference,

however, many of the ideas presented in the two are markedly similar, and are evident in the Restoration and Eighteenth Century both in the works of such "literary" men as Congreve and Dryden, Richardson and Fielding, and such divines as South and Tillotson.

NOTES

Chapter Two

[1]For this brief discussion of Pamela II, I will cite in text from Pamela, 2 vols (London: Everyman, 1963), II.

[2]This is not to say that the words "moral" or "morality" are never used by Richardson to denote Christian "truths," or that they are differentiated with such consistency from "religion" as I may seem to suggest. For example, in Volume VI of the Correspondence he writes to Lady Bradshaigh of Clarissa that the "moral instructions, warnings, &c" were "the very motive with me, of the story's being written at all" (P. 245); also, in a letter to Aaron Hill, 29 Oct., 1746, he links "Moral Equity" in Clarissa with the belief in a "future reward; another of my principal Doctrines", Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson, ed., John Carroll (Oxford: Clarendon, 1946), p. 73; while in a letter to Frances Grainger, 22 Jan., 1749/50, he refers to Clarissa herself as a "Christian Heroine", Selected Letters, p. 145. What I am emphasizing here, and what the evidence of the novels suggests, is that mere "morality," the adherence to various "rules" of conduct or civil tradition, without, as Pamela says, being "touched by the divine grace," is not, however necessary a first step, the same thing as the "RELIGIOUS CONSIDERATIONS," the Christian "truths" which, as my following chapters demonstrate, stand as the most important elements in Richardson's novels. For the best statement of this, see pp. x-xi of The Apprentice's Vade Mecum (London, 1734), where Richardson states: "We have indeed lately had great Encomiums made on Morality, and the Point has been carry'd so far, that the whole of our Duty has been asserted by some bold Innovators to be comprehended therein: 'Tis certain that Morality is an indispensible Requisite of true Religion, and there can be none without it. But it would become the Pride and Ignorance of Pagans only, to magnify it, as the Whole of what is necessary: for, blessed be God, good Christians can glory in a Religion that is as much Superior to that, as the Soul is to the Body; and of which Morality is but as one Round of a Ladder, which shall mount us to the true Christian Perfection. And we shall take upon us to say, That a Person who has a true Sense of Morality, and is under the proper Influences of its most excellent Dictates, must have, at least, the Modesty to treat more respectfully the Faith of his Ancestors, than most of those pert and pragmatical Cavillers do."

[3]Samuel Richardson, Clarissa. Or, the History of a Young Lady, 4 vols. (London: Everyman, 1965); hereafter cited in text.

[4]For valuable discussions of Christianity and Providence in Chaucer, Defoe, and Pope see: Paul G. Ruggiers, The Art of the Canterbury Tales (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965); G.A. Starr, Defoe and

Spiritual Autobiography (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965); J. Paul Hunter, The Reluctant Pilgrim (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1966); and A.L. Williams's "Introduction" to his edition of Poetry and Prose of Alexander Pope (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969). A recent work on Shakespeare is Henry Ansgar Kelly, Divine Providence in the England of Shakespeare's Histories (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970). For examinations of the Christian elements in Rowe and Dryden see J. Douglas Canfield, "Nicholas Rowe's Christian Tragedies," Diss. University of Florida 1969; and Michael J. Conlon, "Politics and Providence: John Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel," Diss. University of Florida 1969.

[5]It should be noted that I am not dealing with every aspect of Clarissa but rather with the dominant pattern which I think brings into focus its general thrust. This pattern, a providential one, seems to provide the framework in which such things as character portrayal and self-analysis take place.

[6]I will not be concerned with the controversy surrounding Clarissa's "culpability". Richardson himself stated on numerous occasions that she was wrong to disobey her parents and to "run away with a man". See Correspondence, Vol. II, p. 217; and Selected Letters, pp. 145, 206. What concerns me at present is the significance, thematically, of the providential language in Clarissa.

[7]That Lovelace is continually admonished as to what is right and wrong action can be seen in the letters of John Belford. See, for example, Vol. II, pp. 161, 489. See also Allan Wendt's "Clarissa's Coffin," PQ, XXXIX, 4 (Oct., 1960), 481-495; in particular p. 492, where he suggests that "Lovelace's desire for power is as criminal as Satan's in that it tends to upset the moral order of the world." See also Correspondence, Vol. IV, where Richardson states of Lovelace that "all those seeds of wickedness were thick sown, which sprouted up into action afterwards in his character...Pride, revenge, a love of intrigue, plot, contrivance! And who is it that asks, Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" (187).

[8]For a valuable discussion of Clarissa's "pride" and her "conscience," (as well as that of Lovelace), see John A. Dussinger's "Conscience and the Pattern of Christian Perfection in Clarissa," PMLA, LXXXI, 3 (June, 1966), 236-245. See also Ira Konigsberg's "The Tragedy of Clarissa," MLQ, XXVII, 3 (Sept., 1966), 285-298. Despite the significance of Clarissa's "pride" in refusing to submit to her parents' wishes, I think that greater emphasis should be placed on her initial failure to persist in her own stated belief that she should trust to Providence to support her during her early trials.

[9]For example, the actions of Joseph Leman in Clarissa. Instrumental in Lovelace's initial "successes" within the Harlowe family, Leman is later the direct cause of Lovelace's ultimate failure and death. This is no simple "biter bit" story, but finds a counterpart in numerous providential texts throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See Nathanial Wanley's The Wonders of the Little World: Or, a General History of Man (London, 1678), Book VI, Chapter XXX, p. 620, concerning "Of Retaliation, and of Such as have Suffered by Their own Devices," in which he offers twenty-three examples of this.

[10]Correspondence, II, pp. 128, 129.

[11]Correspondence, IV, p. 225. As A.D. McKillop points out, Richardson's "defense of his ending" also "stirred up a long discussion of poetic justice by William Duncombe, Joseph Highmore, and George Jeffreys." Samuel Richardson, Printer and Novelist (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1st ed. 1936; rpt. 1961), p. 140. For an excellent contemporary discussion of the significance of Clarissa's death and her highlighting of Providence, see Johannes Stinstra's "Preface" to the "Seventh and Eighth Volumes" where he states: "What is contained here is enough, I imagine, to make us see that a truly religious person does not have to seek his true happiness in this life; to give him courage and to comfort him in all of life's changeable circumstances; to keep him from begrudging the foolish worldly person his vain and short-lasting pleasures; to justify completely godly Providence in exposing His favorites to disasters and oppressions; to instill a courageous and manly piety in him in spite of all these difficulties; and to cleanse the subject of this work, Clarissa, tortured by anger and godlessness, and dragged finally to her death by sorrow, of all reproaches in this respect. May it please the merciful God that all the readers of this work, by the viewing of this beautiful picture in the cruelest of her disasters and misfortunes, might be moved also to prepare themselves for death, according to their circumstances, and might be enabled to undergo that unavoidable fate with contented souls and well-founded hopes!" William S. Slattery, The Richardson-Stinstra Correspondence and Stinstra's Prefaces to Clarissa, pp. 204-205.

[12]The "ways of Providence" and the difficulty of reading aright the significance of things at the time they are happening, are of prime importance for my analysis of the theme of Pamela. As will be demonstrated in my fifth chapter, Pamela, unlike Clarissa, is allowed to see and acknowledge the "unsearchable Wisdom of God" in life, and not at the point of death, for purposes of affirming the justice and mercy of God in this world.

[13]As Richardson himself stated in a letter to Lady Bradshaigh: "O that my own last hour, and the last hour of those I love, may be such as that I have drawn for my Clarissa!" Correspondence, IV, p. 228.

[14]Lovelace's "hardness of heart" is almost a commonplace in Richardson criticism. See Dussinger's "Conscience and the Pattern of Christian Perfection," pp. 238, 240. Richardson's statements concerning this also are numerous. See Correspondence, IV, p. 187.

[15]For an interesting examination of the role of Colonel Morden, see Robert M. Schmitz's "Death and Colonel Morden in Clarissa," SAQ, LXIX, 3 (Summer, 1970), 346-353.

[16]For Richardson's own statements regarding the impossibility of Lovelace's "atonement" see Correspondence, IV, pp. 188-190.

[17]This often has been noted by critics. See A.D. McKillop's The Early Masters of English Fiction (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1956), p. 73; and F.S. Boas's From Richardson to Pinero. Some Innovators

and Idealists (1936; rpt. Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1969), p. 32. See also pp. 167, 168 and 375 of Richardson's Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflections (London, 1755).

[18]Cf. The Whole Duty of Man, Laid Down in a Plain and Familiar Way, for the Use of All, but especially the Meanest Reader (London: F.C. & J. Rivington, 1821), in particular page 139: "And it is most frequently seen, that this sin [pride] meets with very extraordinary judgements even in this life. But if it should not, let not the proud man think that he hath escaped God's vengeance, for it is sure there will be a most sad reckoning in the next; for if God spared not the angels for this sin, but cast them into hell, let no man hope to speed better." Richardson mentions The Whole Duty of Man in Pamela, p. 431 of the Riverside Edition; and in Pamela II, Vol. II, p. 183 of the Everyman Edition.

[19]Since much less critical work has been done on Grandison than on Clarissa, I will examine it in more detail. For an interesting short appraisal of Grandison, however, see Dussinger's "Richardson's 'Christian Vocation,'" especially pp. 13-14. Although not dealing specifically with Providence, Dussinger nevertheless states that Richardson's "religious program remains the same" in Grandison (13).

[20]Many critics, however, see him as a "prig". See Needham's "Richardson's Characterization of Mr. B. and Double Purpose in Pamela," p. 446. See also C.L. Thomson's Samuel Richardson. A Biographical and Critical Study (1900; rpt. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970), pp. 220-223. A statement of Richardson's own appraisal of the "humanity" of Sir Charles, however, is found in Correspondence, III, pp. 169-170: "I would draw him as a mortal. He should have all the human passions to struggle with; and those he cannot conquer he shall endeavour to make subservient to the causes of virtue." Since "passion" in the novel is usually closely associated with "pride," for Dr. Bartlett, Sir Charles's religious adviser, "the life of a good man" is thus "a continual warfare with his passions." Sir Charles Grandison, III, p. 74.

[21]The Theological Works, ed., Rev. Alexander Napier, 9 vols. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1859), II, p. 288.

[22]Theological Works, I, p. 460.

[23]Theological Works, I, p. 451.

[24]Richardson himself attests to this need for "action" by stating to Lady Bradshaigh, Correspondence, IV, p. 222: "A becalmed life is like a becalmed ship. The very happiness to which we are long accustomed becomes like a stagnated water, rather infectious than salutary."

[25]An Exposition of the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of England: Founded on the Holy Scriptures, and the Fathers of the Three First Centuries. In Two Volumes (London, 1734), I, p. 45. This book was printed by Richardson. See William M. Sale's Samuel Richardson: Master Printer, p. 212.

[26]For the frequent intermingling of the concerns of literary men with those of religious writers during the period, see Richardson's

"Preface" to Clarissa, and his letter to Lady Bradshaigh, 26 Oct., 1748, where he states: "Such are the Lessons I endeavour to inculcate by an Example in natural Life. And the more irksome these Lessons are to the Young, the Gay, and the Healthy, the more necessary are they to be inculcated.

A Verse may find him who a Sermon flies
And turn Delight into a Sacrifice--Of this Nature is my Design. Religion never was at so low an Ebb as at present: And if my Work must be supposed of the Novel kind, I was willing to try if a Religious Novel would do good." Selected Letters, pp. 91, 92. This statement is also found in a slightly edited form in Correspondence, IV, p. 187.

CHAPTER THREE

Richardson and Christian Providence

The "Providence" which Clarissa saw as the force preserving, testing, and finally supporting her at the moment of death, the "Providence" of which Sir Charles Grandison wished to serve as an "instrument," represents, apart from the evidence of his novels, an important aspect of Richardson's own view of the world as it is revealed in his correspondence. For example, Edward Young's evaluation of Richardson's "mission" as a novelist is not empty flattery, but an incisive insight into his aims and accomplishment: "When the pulpit fails, other expedients are necessary. I look upon you as a peculiar instrument of Providence, adjusted to the peculiar exigence of the times; in which all would be fine gentlemen, and only are at a loss to know what that means. While they read, perhaps, from pure vanity, they do not read in vain; and are betrayed into benefit, while amusement is their pursuit. I speak not this at a venture; I am so happy as already to have had proofs of what I say."[1] A similar evaluation addressed to Richardson is the one by the Dutch translator of Clarissa, Johannes Stinstra, who tells him that one "cannot forbear to observe and venerate the hand and dispensation of Providence, whose footsteps we commonly not enough acknowledge in particular cases, which thus from your earliest years has instilled in your mind those happy facts, which afterwards have produced such fine and usefull fruits. However I must admire that this talent so long has laid hidden, the whole

interval from your youth to your more advanced years."[2] Throughout the correspondence, Richardson appears as a believer in Providence, and his evaluation of himself, in a letter to J.B. Defreval, is reminiscent of contemporary theological writings which stressed the intrinsic dignity of individual men and the close association between human action and Divine support: "My own industry, and God's providence, have been my whole reliance. The great are not great to me, unless they are good. And it is a glorious privilege, that a middling man enjoys who has preserved his independency, and can occasionally (though not Stoically) tell the world, what he thinks of that world, in hopes to contribute, though by his mite, to mend it."[3]

Important events in Richardson's life and in the lives of his friends also were frequently described in providential terms.[4] Writing to Thomas Edwards about a "warehouse room" fire, Richardson states that he "had a providential deliverance" from it,[5] and, in a letter to Mrs. Delany concerning both her recent and "blustering" passage to Ireland and the actions of a young lady during it, he states: "Well might the young lady behave with magnanimity. Had she not as much reason to rely on the care of Providence as Ceasar on his fortunes, when he encountered the Egyptian boatman in a like storm."[6] Lady Bradshaigh, in describing her recent escape from an earthquake, states that she "religiously" believed that "God's providence is over all his works; and on that every serious person must depend, whatever situation he may be in."[7] In a letter dealing in part with Richardson's problems concerning Irish literary "pirates," the Reverend Philip Skelton assures him that "whether we succeed or fail in our other endeavours, to serve our friends, there is one in which we cannot be disappointed; I mean that proposed by my dear friend, in soliciting Divine Providence for each other's happiness."[8]

A final example is that of Richardson's friend and physician, Dr. George Cheyne, who at one point in their correspondence, counsels him to give over apothecaries, have "Patience and Perseverance," and "trust to God and Providence under the lowest, thinnest, and coolest diet you can bear in Hopes that in Time this may mend your Blood which would infallibly mend all the rest."[9]

As even these brief passages from his correspondence indicate, when a writer such as Richardson chooses for his first fictional heroine a defenseless waiting-maid, who, early in her trials, comforts herself "that God who takes the innocent Heart into his Almighty Protection...is alone able to baffle and confound the Devices of the Mighty" (100), he is not being eccentrically self-righteous or indulging in moralistic cant, but is instead echoing the theological concerns of his age. Such a writer will further simply be affirming his acquiescence in common views of his age about the close association between the existence of God and His Providence.

The reality of God's frequent intervention in the affairs of His creation was often directly linked in Richardson's time to His very existence. In 1754, John Leland summed up this connection by stating:

> The doctrine of divine providence hath a very near connection with that of the existence of the Deity, and is no less necessary to be believed. To acknowledge a God that brought all things into existence and yet to deny that he afterwards taketh care of the creatures he had made, or that he exerciseth any inspection over them, as a moral governor, or concerneth himself about their actions, and the events relating to them, is, with regard to all the purposes of religion, the same thing as not to acknowledge a God at all.[10]

Within this scheme of creation, man, as the only "reasonable" creature, came to occupy a strategic "middle" position. Man, though a special part of the creation, is a part of nature, and yet, because made in the "image"

of God and thus able to "know" God, is more subject to Providence than the "natural," unreasoning parts of nature. As William Turner stated: "The Divine Providence is exercised over all the Creation, but more especially upon Man then other Creatures that are made subject to him; For God causeth his Sun to shine, and his Clouds to distil with Rain, upon the just and unjust: But more remarkably upon those that fear God, and keep close to him in the way of Duty, and a close and cordial Devotion, then any others."[11] In general, however, God uses both man and nature, sometimes simultaneously, to fulfill His Divine purpose, to uphold His Divine order on earth.[12]

Despite man's position as a "reasonable creature," and despite such aids as his "conscience" and "nature," something else was seen as needed for a meaningful existence. This "something else" is the more direct support of a concerned God, and thus Richard Hooker proposes that "there is no kind of faculty or power in man or any other creature, which can rightly perform the functions allotted to it, without perpetual aid and concurrence of that Supreme Cause of all things."[13] In general, and as William Wake later put it, God declares His will to man in "Chiefly Two ways; by the Dispensations of his Providence, and by the Rules he has set us to Live by; whether they be by Nature implanted in Us, or be Revealed in the Gospel of Christ."[14] John Tillotson, for one, is adamant on this point when he says in Sermon XXI: "I hope it may be certain and clear enough That there is a God; and that his Providence governs the World."[15] There is nothing, for the true Christian, outside the power and concern of God. William Wake, in his Commentary upon the Church-Catechism, states this best in answering Question Thirteen of Section VII: "That as God, at the Beginning thus created All Things; so having Created them, he has ever since continued to Support and Preserve them, Heb.1.3.

And that so particularly, that there is not the least Thing in the World, to which his Providence does not extend itself, Mat.VI.26, 28, 29, 30. X.29, 30."[16] Belief in the omnipotence and direct intervention of God in the world implied for the age, and for Richardson, the possibility that God may effectively enter into any and all events to support the good and punish the evil:

> In a word, if we allow God to be the Governour of the World, we cannot but grant, that he orders and disposes of all Inferiour Events; and if we allow him to be a Wise and a Rational Governour, he cannot but direct them to a certain end.[17]

Without such an active God and the frequent signs of His intervening power, man, it was believed, would wander lost in a world governed by "chance" or the whims of purely secular powers.[18]

Because of a conviction that man's vision was limited, divines throughout the period found it necessary to distinguish between "chance" or "fortune" and Divine Providence. For most religious writers, God's control of His creatures stood in direct opposition to beliefs in the merely whimsical nature of creation.[19] Thomas Burnet, speaking of the Epicurean notion of a "chance" coalition of atoms, a "material" theory of creation, states in The Sacred Theory of the Earth that "'tis little better than non-sence, to say the World and all its furniture rise by chance, in that notion of it."[20] Isaac Barrow, discussing the interpositions of God which sometimes even "alter the course of nature", insists that this is done as the "fuller and clearer illustration [John IX.3] of his glory, the shewing that all things do not pass on in a fatal track".[21] Robert South, in a sermon based on Proverbs 16.33, a commonly cited providential passage,[22] says that "as all Contingencies are comprehended by a certain Divine Knowledge, so they are governed by as certain and steady a Providence",[23] and further, that "God's Hand is

as steady as his Eye," able "thus to reduce Contingency to Method, Instability and Chance it self to an unfailing Rule and Order".[24] John Tillotson in "A Thanksgiving-Sermon for the Late Victory at Sea" states that political wisdom or success also depends upon "an unaccountable mixture of that which the Heathen called Fortune, but we Christians by its true name, the Providence of God; which does interpose in human Affairs, and loves to confound the wisdom of the wise, and to turn their counsels into foolishness."[25] Samuel Clarke, in his Discourse upon Natural Religion, states of the power of God that:

> Again; 'Tis a thing absolutely and necessarily Fitter in it self, that the Supreme Author and Creator of the Universe, should govern, order, and direct all things to certain and constant regular Ends, than that every thing should be permitted to go on at adventures, produce uncertain Effects merely by chance and in the utmost confusion, without any determinate View or Design at all.[26]

As William Law states in A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life, nothing in the life of individual men and the creation is left to chance:

> We are as sure that nothing happens to us by chance, as that the world itself was not made by chance; we are as certain that all things happen and work together for our good, as that God is goodness itself. So that a man has as much reason to will every thing that happens to him, because God wills it, as to think that is wisest which is directed by infinite wisdom.[27]

In the terms of the age, to say that "chance" ruled in the world was to imply in effect that God had abdicated His position as the center of all things, as the sustainer of all existence, and subsequently that justice, mercy, and order itself had ceased to exist. The implications of a universe ruled by chance are best described by John Tillotson in his sermon "Success Not Always Answerable to the Probability of Second Causes":

> Were there not in the World a Being, that is wiser, and better, and more powerful than our selves, and

> that keeps things from running into endless confusion and disorder; a Being that loves us, and takes care of us, and that will certainly consider and reward all the good that we do, and all the evil that we suffer upon his account. I do not see what reason any man could have to take any comfort and joy in Being, or to wish the continuance of it for one moment.[28]

If indeed man were ruled by the "stars," or predestined by the dictates of a "fate," it was believed that he was no longer a "reasonable" person, but rather a grotesque and expendable cog in some vast machine going nowhere and accomplishing nothing. "Fortune," usually depicted as "blind," dispensing its "gifts" without apparent plan or purpose, cannot significantly differentiate between men as species and man as individual. Under the guidance of "Providence," however, man, marked by both individuation and personality, became part of a good plan as a specific being having intrinsic worth from the moment of his birth.[29] Thus, a belief in Providence precludes the "coincidental" or "accidental" (though not such events as "seem" to be mere coincidence or accident), for such terms have no valid "meaning" for reasonable creatures, and imply simply a lack of understanding of the particular workings of Providence. In the "real" world, whether it be a shipwreck or the fall of a prince, an untimely death or a last-minute reprieve of an innocent man, it was Providence and not fortune at work. Not that man was to remain passive, blindly accepting every event of his life as "God's will" in the sense that he became merely an inert tool in the hand of a master-craftsman; rather he was to be watchful for those moments when God's will and man's purpose intersected for the accomplishment of some larger public or private good.

Believing that God watches over both the "species" and the "individual," English divines emphasized a doctrine of "general" and "particular"

Providence, and a consequent system of "rewards" and "punishments" invoked both in this life and in the next.[30] General Providence was apparent in such things as the creation of the world, the sustaining of that world and of mankind, the upholding or destroying of kingdoms, and was sometimes stressed at the expense of a particular or "special" Providence concerned for the well-being of even the lowliest of creatures. George Hakewill thus states that God's "Providence reacheth both to generalls and individuals, but to generalls more especially (because they more immediately conduce to the perfection of the world, and consequently to the advancement of his honour) but to the individuals in relation to their generalls."[31] The more common position, however, is that of Isaac Barrow, who saw them of equal significance and importance, simply as two manifestations of the same Divine power, "general in the government of mankind; particular in God's dealing with each single person."[32]

English religious writers often stress that since it is difficult for man to discern the exact meaning of God's purpose in a particular instance, he should beware of judging God by human standards. John Wilkins speaks to this point when he warns: "And tho' some particular Dispensations may seem unto us to be difficult and obscure, His Judgments being unsearchable, and his ways past finding out; yet we may be most sure, that there is an excellent Contrivance in all of them, Though clouds and darkness may be round about him, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne."[33] In other words, it is God's will and not man's that is paramount. Indeed, as William Sherlock states, to trust in Providence "is not to trust in God, that he will do that particular thing for us which we desire; but to trust our selves and all our concernments with God, to do for us in every particular case which we

recommend to his care, what he sees best and fittest for us in such cases."[34] Man must bear in mind that God "reserves to himself a liberty to judge whether it be good for us; but if what we desire be good for us, our trust and dependence on God will engage Providence on our side."[35] Added to these elements was the belief that men and kingdoms, princes and paupers, were rewarded or punished according to their just deserts, certainly in the next world and frequently, as marks of God's special concern, in this one. Despite the fact that in this world, as Francis Atterbury states, "Good and Bad Men are blended together," and that sometimes "we are molested by the One, as well as benefited by the other,"[36] the special Providence of God often works, as Atterbury states in another sermon, "in order to have its influence on Things below observ'd and acknowledg'd; which would go near to be forgotten, did he not, by some remarkable instances of his Interposition in human Affairs, raise Men up at fit Times, into a lively and vigorous Sense of it."[37]

The major difficulty facing those who spoke for belief in a "special" Providence, one which at times even set the "Laws of Nature" or "probability" at variance for the direct support of a single person or cause, was to show that the workings of such a Providence did in no way diminish the importance of a more "general" one. Jeremy Taylor speaks to this issue by saying of God that:

> His providence is extra-regular, and produces strange things beyond common rules; and he that led Israel through a sea, and made a rock pour forth waters, and the heavens to give them bread and flesh, and whole armies to be destroyed with fantastic noises, and the fortune of all France to be recovered and entirely revolved by the arms and conduct of a girl, against the torrent of the English fortune and chivalry, can do what he please, and still retain the same providence over mankind as ever. And it is impossible for that man to despair who remembers that his helper is omnipotent, and can do what he pleases.[38]

For John Wilkins, if there were no "particular Providence"[39] the "good" would be left to suffer alone, without "reward" for their righteousness, in a vicious world: "What could be a greater disparagement to divine Providence, than to permit the Calamities and Sufferings which good Men undergo in this World, many times upon the account of religion, to pass unrewarded; and the many Mischiefs and Prophanations, which wicked Men take the advantage of committing by their Greatness and Prosperity in this World to go unpunished?"[40]

It was common for divines to use as examples of this particular Providence those times when the helpless, the despondent, the unlikely, or the prideful were singled out for such rewards or punishments as they deserved. There was, as Robert South stated, "not the least thing that falls within the cognizance of Man, but is directed by the counsel of God. Not an Hair can fall from our Head, nor a Sparrow to the Ground, without the Will of our Heavenly Father."[41] No one could be sure of knowing at the time the exact purpose behind events, for often even man's despondency or his failure was the very means used by God to effect His desired end. A belief in Providence should indeed cause a man to beware of despairing in the face of even dreadful calamities:

> therefore, let no Man who owns the Belief of a Providence, grow desperate, or forlorn, under any Calamity, or Straight whatsoever; but compose the Anguish of his Thoughts, and rest his amazed Spirits upon this one Consideration, That he knows not which way the Lot may fall, or what may happen to him; he comprehends not those strange, unaccountable Methods, by which Providence may dispose of him.[42]

For Tillotson, this special Providence of God "which sometimes presents men with unexpected opportunities, and interposeth accidents which no human wisdom could foresee," also "gives success to very unlikely means, and defeats the swift, and the strong, and the learned, and the industrious."[43] The probable times for a particular intervention by God were

even capable of being systematized into lists of "rules." For example, Isaac Barrow argues that occasions of Providence could be inferred from such marks as the "wonderful strangeness of events";[44] or "when plots, with extreme caution and secrecy contrived in darkness are by improbable means, by unaccountable accidents, disclosed and brought to light" (458); or the "seasonableness or suddenness of events. When that, which in itself is not ordinary, nor could well be expected, doth fall out happily, in the nick of an exigency, for the relief of innocence, the encouragement of goodness, the support of a good cause, the furtherance of any good purpose" (460); or the "righteousness of the case" itself (465); or the "correspondence of events to the prayers and desires of good men" (466); or God's "dispensing rewards and punishments" according to men's just deserts to fit the "actions upon which they are grounded" (467); or, and most pertinent to Pamela, those times whenever:

> right is oppressed, or perilously invaded, when innocence is grossly abused, or sorely beset; when piety is fiercely opposed, or cunningly undermined; when good men for the profession of truth, or the practice of virtue, are persecuted, or grievously threatened with mischief; then may we presume that God is not unconcerned, nor will prove backward to reach forth his succour (466).

George Hickes, in a "list" similar to Barrow's, offers as a prime example of God's special intervention those times when His assistance "falls out very seasonably for the Relief and Vindication of oppressed Innocence,"[45] while John Wilkins emphasizes those extraordinary Providences which "have many times happened...for the punishing of obstinate Sinners and for the Deliverance of such as were Religious, in answer to their Prayers."[46]

Thus man, in all situations, is to rely upon God and look to His power as the only certain support in the world. No action is too great or too small for God to exert His influence upon, for God to single out

for his special reward or punishment. The innocent, those suffering for their religion or steadfast in their virtue and reliance upon God, were most often the objects of His merciful and timely succor, while those denying the efficacy of His Providence, those who turned their backs on His teaching or closed their minds to His warnings were liable to feel His wrath, most assuredly in the next world and frequently in _this_ one. At times this wrath could extend to the whole world (as in the Deluge);[47] at times it could be delayed for purposes of giving the sinner opportunity to repent. But, whatever happened to the wicked in this world, as Francis Atterbury states, one could be certain in the knowledge that "such Irregularities are set right in another",[48] and that the innocent, the oppressed, are under the special protection of a God who "hath so peculiarly taken upon him the protection of the poor and oppressed, that he is engaged as it were in honour to be their avenger."[49]

Coupled with the prevalence of providential language and situation in _Clarissa_ and _Sir Charles Grandison_, and viewed within the context of a theology which was vitally concerned with the manifestations of Divine Providence in the natural world, such statements as these by Richardson and his friends, as well as those by English divines, surely suggest that his use of Providence in his first novel was not merely casual or decorative.

NOTES

Chapter Three

[1]Correspondence, II, pp. 32, 33.

[2]Slattery, p. 60.

[3]Correspondence, V, p. 273.

[4]Cf. Correspondence, III, p. 264.

[5]Correspondence, III, p. 49.

[6]Correspondence, IV, p. 85.

[7]Correspondence, VI, p. 3.

[8]Correspondence, V, p. 196.

[9]Charles F. Mullett, The Letters of Doctor George Cheyne to Samuel Richardson (1733-1743), (University of Missouri Studies, XVIII, 1, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1943), p. 97. See also Cheyne's statement to Richardson that: "I have been and am an unworthy Instrument in the Hands of Providence to preserve and I hope in Time to recover into good Health and Spirits an honest and serious Man to his Family and Friends" (113).

[10]A View of the Principal Deistical Writers that Have Appeared in England in the Last and Present Century. Two Volumes. (London, 1798), Vol. I, p. 450. Richardson printed Vol. II of this book. See W.M. Sale, Jr., Samuel Richardson: Master Printer, p. 184.

[11]A Compleat History of the Most Remarkable Providences both of Judgment and Mercy. Which Have Hapned in This Present Age. (London, 1697), p. 105.

[12]To the thoughtful man, especially to the Christian, all creation was a living book attesting to the power and concern of God; as Sir Thomas Browne saw it, "To thoughtful observators, the whole world is a phylactery; and everything we see an item of the wisdom, power, or goodness of God". Sir Thomas Browne's Works. Including His Life and Correspondence, ed., Simon Wilkin, F.L.S., 4 vols (London: W. Pickering, 1835-36), IV, "Christian Morals," Part the Third, p. 99. According to A.D. McKillop, Samuel Richardson, Printer and Novelist, p. 188, Johnson gave Richardson a copy of the "Christian Morals".

[13]The Works of that Learned and Judicious Divine, Mr. Richard Hooker with an Account of His Life and Death by Isaac Walton, arranged by the Rev. John Keble, M.A., 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1888), I, p. 236.

[14]The Principles of the Christian Religion Explained: In a Brief Commentary upon the Church-Catechism (London, 1731), p. 135.

[15]The Works, 10 vols. (Dublin, 1739), I, p. 427. Richardson mentions Tillotson along with Balguy in the answer to Stinstra cited in note 26, Chapter One. Also, quotations from a Tillotson sermon close out "A Concluding Note by the Editor" appended to Sir Charles Grandison, Vol. VI, p. 330 of the Shakespeare Head Edition.

[16]p. 31.

[17]Robert South, Twelve Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions (London, 1704), Sermon VIII, p. 326. South is mentioned in Clarissa, II, p, 194.

[18]As John Balguy said: "Were the World without a Governour, or without a Governour of infinite Wisdom and Perfection, the Nature and Circumstances of Mankind would be a Scene of mere Disorder and Confusion." The Foundation of Moral Goodness, p. 90, British Moralists.

[19]While there were many religious controversies in the Eighteenth Century, the most significant, especially for Providentialists, grew out of the earlier Epicurean notion of a "chance" or "materialistic" creation of the world. Thus, when in Richardson's circle such terms or classifications as "Deist" or "Atheist" were lumped together with "Epicurean", it was not "whimsical" or "naïve" but rather, it seems to me, done with a view toward exposing the total incompatibility of such ideas with orthodox Christian belief in Divine Providence and the continual concern of God for His creation. Thomas Edwards, in a letter to Richardson (Jan. 15, 1755), states it best when, after agreeing with Richardson's assessment of Bolingbroke, he comments: "I know not whether his system may be more properly called deistical, or atheistical; since, though in words he allows a God, he seems to make him such a one as Epicurus did; and to think that we are beneath his notice, and have very little or nothing to do with him. He laughs at all notions of revelation, or a particular providence, and reckons the present life the whole of man's existence." Correspondence, III, p. 109. For Richardson's own discussion of Deism and Atheism, see Part Three of the Vade Mecum. While the literature concerning orthodox attacks on Epicurean philosophy is extensive, a good example is provided by the "Prefaces" to Thomas Creech's translation T. Lucretius Carus, Of the Nature of Things, 2 vols (London, 1714).

[20]The Sacred Theory of the Earth, with an introduction by Basil Willey (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois Press, 1965), Book II, p. 208. Richardson printed part of this; see Sale, p. 154.

[21]The Theological Works, V, pp. 267-268.

[22]"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD."

[23]Twelve Sermons, p. 321.

[24]Twelve Sermons, p. 322.

[25]The Works, II, p. 457.

[26]Discourse upon Natural Religion, 1st ed., 1706; rpt. British Moralists, Being Selections from Writers Principally of the Eighteenth Century, ed., L.A. Selby-Bigge, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1897), II, p. 5. Richardson mentions Clarke in his answer to Stinstra, cited in note 26, Chapter One.

[27]The Works of the Reverend William Law, A.M., 9 vols (London, 1762), IV, p. 456. Richardson printed Law's The Oxford Methodists, and The Way to Divine Knowledge, Sale, p. 183.

[28]The Works, II, p. 357.

[29]Earlier discussions of this are numerous. As Aquinas points out, buttressing his arguments against "fate" with quotations from Augustine and Gregory, God, through His Providence, directs the actions of the rational creature "not only as belonging to the species, but also as personal acts." On the Truth of the Catholic Faith. Summa Contra Gentiles. Book Three: Providence. Part I, translated with an introduction and notes by Vernon J. Bourke (New York: Hanover House, 1956), p. 224. Foreshadowing Aquinas's statement is the one by the early Church Father, Origen, who in his Contra Celsum, IV. 99, states that "God does not take care, as Celsus imagines, only of the universe as a whole, but in addition to that He takes particular care of every rational being. And providence will never abandon the universe. For even if some part of it becomes very bad because the rational being sins, God arranges to purify it, and after a time to turn the whole world back to himself." Origen: Contra Celsum, translated with an introduction and notes by Henry Chadwick (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1953), p. 263; Richardson cites Origen on page 78 of the Vade Mecum. Similar statements from the writings of early Christian polemicists are frequent, but one of the most cogent is that of St. Augustine who views God as a Being having "special care of every one of us, as if thou hadst care but of one alone; and so regardest all, as if but single persons!" St. Augustine's Confessions. With an English Translation by William Watts (1631), 2 vols. (London: Loeb, 1919), Book III, Chapt. XI, p. 139.

[30]The ways of illustrating the workings of Providence and the position of man are manifold during the period. For example, general and particular Providence were frequently illustrated by the "wheel within a wheel" of Ezekiel. See Richardson's friend, Edward Young's An Argument Drawn from the Circumstances of Christ's Death for the Truth of His Religion. A Sermon Preached before His Majesty, at Kensington, June, 1758, from Edward Young. The Complete Works. Poetry and Prose, ed., James Nichols, with a life of the author by John Doran (1854), 2 vols, (Facsimile reproduced from a copy in the library of the University of Göttingen--Hildesheim, 1968), II, p. 545. According to Sale, a copy of this sermon was sent to Richardson to proof and criticize, and was printed by him. Sale, pp. 216-217.

[31]An Apologie of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World (Oxford, 1627), Liber V, p. 23.

[32]The Theological Works, II, p. 46.

[33]Of the Principles and Duties of Natural Religion: Two Books (London, 1734), p. 212.

[34]A Discourse Concerning the Divine Providence (London, 1694), p. 374. Richardson mentions Sherlock's "noble Discourses" in Correspondence, III, p. 107.

[35]William Sherlock, Discourse, p. 377.

[36]Fourteen Sermons Preach'd on Several Occasions (London, 1708), p. 383.

[37]Forty Three Sermons and Discourses on Several Subjects and Occasions (London, 1742), p. 129.

[38]Holy Living and Dying with Prayers Containing the Whole Duty of a Christian and the Parts of Devotion Fitted to All Occasions, and Furnished for All Necessities (1650, 1651; rpt. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1907), from Holy Living, p. 171; Richardson mentions Taylor's Holy Living and Dying in Correspondence, IV, p. 237.

[39]Of the Principles and Duties of Natural Religion, p. 114.

[40]Natural Religion, p. 153.

[41]Twelve Sermons, p. 323.

[42]Twelve Sermons, p. 357.

[43]The Works, II, p. 345.

[44]The Theological Works, I, p. 455; cited in text.

[45]A Collection of Sermons, 2 vols (London, 1713), II, p. 34.

[46]Natural Religion, p. 77.

[47]Patrick Delany, Revelation Examin'd With Candour (London, 1732), p. 184. Richardson printed this book; see Sale, p. 165. See also Thomas Burnet, Sacred Theory of the Earth, Book I, Chapter VIII, p. 82 ff.

[48]Forty Three Sermons, p. 131. Richardson printed Atterbury's Maxims, Reflections and Observations, Divine, Moral and Political...To which is added, His Lordship's Latin version of Mr. Dryden's Absalom and Achitophol (London, 1723); Sale, p. 147.

[49]The Whole Duty of Man, p. 232.

CHAPTER FOUR

"To avoid the Tempter": the Bedfordshire section of Pamela.

In the year following her lady's death, Pamela is revealed as an innocent fifteen-year-old waiting-maid who has lived, for the most part, a sheltered, almost sequestered, life. Her religious training, and the religious example of her parents and Lady B., have instilled in her a belief in the necessity for moral behavior and a trust in the goodness of man. This trust is evident from her first letter, where, in writing to her parents about the death of Lady B., she views as an indication of God's "Graciousness" (a "Graciousness" which her parents and herself "have so often experienced at a Pinch") the fact that she was particularly recommended to the young Squire for his protection. Grateful that she will not be sent home "to be a Clog upon" her "dear Parents" (25), she assures them that, since God will not let her "want" (26), and since her master is kind and good, there is hope that all will turn out for the best.

Pamela's initial assessment of Mr. B., dependent as it is upon her religious upbringing and innocent trust, indicates that she is a person who believes that this training and trust are common to everyone. Mr. B., "dutiful to his Parents", and presently showing great kindness to her, is for Pamela the "best of Gentlemen" (26) and she views his actions as evidence that her life will continue as it has in the past. Her parents, however, wiser in the ways of the world, promptly warn her to beware of placing too much trust in the young Squire and to return home in the event that his actions prove dishonorable. Troubled by this warning, Pamela

nevertheless quickly assures them that "by God's Grace" she "never will do any thing that shall bring" their "grey Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave" (28), tells them of the "good Counsel" of Mrs. Jervis (30), and continues to praise the goodness of Mr. B., whose gifts and kindnesses soon make him appear "like an Angel" to her (31). That evil may be present in Mr. B. is less a reality to Pamela at this point than a remote possibility. Even if the Squire has ulterior motives for his goodness to her, she hopes that God's "Grace" will enable her to withstand temptation and that she will have sufficient strength of character to return home in safety. Following the incident of the "Summer-house," however, she no longer is able to disregard the possibility that her parents' fears were correct, and from that time the major movement of the novel begins.

Following her parents' second warning, Pamela learns that Lady Davers, when told that Mr. B. was not considering her for a position within the Davers household (ostensibly out of a fear of the possible designs of Lord Davers's young nephew), "shook her Head, and said Ah! Brother" (33). Although for Mrs. Jervis this exclamation portended possible trouble, Pamela herself expresses hope that "God...will give" her "his Grace" to withstand whatever may occur and that "there is no Occasion" for fear (33). Promising to keep her parents informed so that they can "continue" to give her their "good Advice" and prayers, she remains hopeful that nothing dishonorable is intended. What follows, however, are two attacks on her virtue. Although for Pamela herself these incidents reveal that Mr. B., his lust no longer hidden, has changed from seeming to be an "Angel of a Master" into a man whose "true Colours" are "black and...frightful" (34), what commences at this point is both the struggle within Mr. B. between his lust and his good qualities, and a process whereby Pamela's confident beliefs are tested in a trial which ultimately enables her to obtain,

after much confusion and despair, a fuller awareness of the workings of God in the world.[1]

Unable to control his passion, Mr. B.'s first overture ends embarrassingly when Pamela refuses to submit to his desires and staunchly lectures him on the relative duties of masters and servants. Although he attempts to salvage his bruised dignity by telling her he only meant to "try" her prudence, Mr. B. also cautions her not to tell anyone of his actions (35). While his pride of condition and birth is intact, and his lust undiminished, Mr. B. appears afraid of the opinion of others, and his fear is even more pronounced during his second attempt. At that time, Pamela's kneeling supplication for "pity" results instead in an effort to assault her. Calling upon the "Angels, and Saints, and all the Host of Heaven" to defend her (41), she saves herself by running into an adjacent room and locking the door.[2] Seeing through the key-hole that she had fallen into a fit, Mr. B. calls for Mrs. Jervis and with her help bursts open the door. As he leaves them, the Squire first cautions Mrs. Jervis to "say nothing of the Matter" and then stays "in the next Room to let nobody come near" them so "that his foul Proceedings might not be known" (42).

The failure Mr. B. has met with has wounded his pride, made him disregard his own position, and caused his lust so to intensify as to make him almost deaf to all religious admonishments, and to the efficacy of the beliefs which Pamela so persistently clings to.[3] More important than this, however, is that either the fear of the presence of others, or, in the case of the second attempt, the proximity of Mrs. Jervis, is enough to force him to quit his attacks before they succeed. What is being established here, and what becomes even more apparent later, is the fact that in the context of a Bedfordshire, within the confines of a well-ordered

estate, Mr. B.'s attempts have little chance of success. While this is important in providing a practical as well as technical reason for Pamela's abduction to Lincolnshire, it also should be kept in mind that, within such an environment, the efficacy of her appeals to God for preservation can be overlooked; the ready availability of strictly human support may plausibly blur any awareness of Divine concern for her plight. In Bedfordshire her trust is largely placed in the support and concern of man, a "natural" context, but a context which will prepare us for the later, and "supernaturally" supported, survival of Pamela's virtue.

The scenes immediately preceding Mr. B.'s most serious attack, the incident of Mrs. Jervis's "Chamber," continue to display both his own developing pride, which soon causes him to appear almost "Satanic" to Pamela, and her own growing bewilderment and hope for assistance in the face of his increasing hostility. As the Squire attempts to soothe his wounded pride, and to control the lust which increasingly is in conflict with his desire to act honorably, he imperiously "accuses" Pamela of hypocrisy, or of viewing him as a "Devil incarnate", or of using his "Name with Freedom" (45). Perplexed by the changes in a master who, heretofore, has appeared to be all goodness, Pamela comes to rely more frequently on the strength derived from her early training and faith. The delay in her return home soon allows further opportunity for her to try to make sense of her present situation, and, subsequently, further opportunity for her beliefs to be tested. When Mrs. Jervis attempts to calm her, by suggesting that Mr. B's growing love is responsible for his alteration from a "fine Gentleman" with a "great deal of Wit and Sense" into a tempter, Pamela replies: "I hope, if I was sure he would be kind to me, and never turn me off at all, that God will give me his Grace, so as to hate and withstand his Temptations, were he not only my Master, but my King,

for the Sin's sake; and this my poor dear Parents have always taught me" (49). And against Mrs. Jervis's well-intentioned efforts at reconciliation, Pamela states that to remain in Bedfordshire after the recent attacks would be to imply that she was consenting to her own ruin. Although she hopes at this point that God will give her the "Grace" to "not give way to" the Squire's "Temptations on any Account", she nevertheless feels "it would be very presumptuous...to rely upon" her "own Strength, against a Gentleman of his Qualifications and Estate, and who is" her "master" (50). Stating that "Every thing turns about for the best" (53), she tries to calm her fears by relying on the hope that she will soon return home. Mr. B., however, increasingly infuriated over his lack of success, berates Pamela on numerous occasions, and causes Mrs. Jervis to comment finally that: "This Love is the D___l! in how many strange Shapes does it make People shew themselves! And in some the farthest from their Hearts" (55). A nice observation, for Mr. B. has descended from appearing as almost "an Angel" to being viewed as one who, like Satan, "accuses" or "tempts" the good, with his "love" further causing him to appear in "strange Shapes," a phenomenon reminiscent of the Miltonic Satan and of the protean nature of evil itself.

The assault which takes place in Mrs. Jervis's "Chamber" provides another example of Mr. B.'s pride and fear of public opinion, and, in Pamela's actions, a hope for Divine assistance mixed with reliance upon human support. Writing to her parents after the attempt, Pamela, almost despairing of human justice since Mr. B. is himself a "Justice" and "greater than any Constable" or "Headborough", hopes that "God Almighty... in time, will right" her for the wrongs she has suffered, and proceeds to tell them of how she has been "so barbarously used" (64). Now viewing Mr. B. as possessing the "worst Heart in the World" (65), she relates how

she and Mrs. Jervis had been discussing his recent behavior not knowing that he was then hiding in their closet. Commenting on the bad advice Mrs. Jervis recently had given her, which resulted in the incident of the "going-away dress," Pamela states that Mr. B.'s half-crazed actions on that occasion are indications to her that "Lucifer always is ready to promote his own Work and Workmen" (65).[4] Shortly after this assessment of Mr. B.'s further degeneration, the Squire himself "rushes" into the room and moves toward the bed. Terrified, Pamela appeals "for God's sake! for Pity's sake" (66) that Mrs. Jervis protect her, and, if necessary, that she "raise all the House" (67). Throwing herself upon Pamela's coat and clasping her around the waist, Mrs. Jervis, despite threats that she will be dismissed, calls upon Mr. B. to stop and appeals to God that He "defend" her "poor Pamela" (67). Continuing to place herself between Pamela and the Squire, Mrs. Jervis refuses to leave the room. It is only after Pamela falls into "Fit after Fit" and after he warns Mrs. Jervis to "conceal the Matter" that Mr. B. retires. Later, she relates to her parents her belief that, despite Mr. B.'s liberties, Mrs. Jervis "saved" her "from worse" (67), and is thankful for her timely assistance. Once again, Mr. B.'s fear of what others might say and the proximity of human support save Pamela from an imminent danger.

At the meeting following this assault, Mr. B., having regained his composure and remaining adamant in his refusal to relent in the dismissal of Mrs. Jervis, correctly surmises that Pamela "has made a Party of the whole House in her Favour against" him (68), and then ignores the housekeeper's attempts to bring him to an awareness of the seriousness of his actions. Affecting at this point to be indifferent to Pamela, and even hinting of his proposed marriage to a lady of quality, Mr. B. assures them that he has "overcome" his recent passion (69). At first Pamela

fears that these evidences of "Repentance and Amendment are mighty suddenly resolv'd upon", but quickly comforts herself, relying on teachings that since "God's Grace is not confin'd to Space," it is possible that this "Grace" has "smote him to the Heart at once, for his Injuries to" her (70). Despite this hope, she nevertheless resolves to remain cautious.[5]

Although the Squire now appears "very civil" (70), Pamela soon has further opportunities to assess the present character of a man whom she previously thought to be the "best of Gentlemen". During a meeting shortly after his decision to allow her to leave, Mr. B. asks her judgment on the suitableness of his "Birthday" clothes.[6] Remarking to herself on the beauty of this "rich Suit of Cloaths", Pamela, unlike her earlier comments on his "Angel-like" qualities, now only hopes that "they make him an honest Man, as he was always thought; but I have not found it so, God help me" (70). Now awed by his "grand" appearance, and yet in a sense saddened by the alterations in his initial character, she tries to make him see the spiritual danger he is in as a result of his recent actions. She warns him, in a statement directly pertinent to much of the action in this section, that if he "could be so afraid of" his "own Servants knowing of" his "Attempts upon a poor unworthy Creature, that is under" his "Protection while" in his household, "surely" he "ought to be more afraid of God Almighty, in whose Presence we all stand, in every Action of our Lives, and to whom the greatest as well as the least, must be accountable, let them think what they list" (71). Mr. B., however, stung by this remark, reverts to his former attitude and scoffs at her "unfashionable Jargon", ridiculing her "romantic Turn for Virtue, and all that" (71). This failure to move her master causes Pamela, almost in desperation, first to comment on "how easy it is to go from bad to worse, when once People give way to Vice" (72), and then to ask God both to

bless her and send her "out of this Wicked House" where "there is not the Fear of God, and good Rule kept by" its head (73).

The closing scenes of the Bedfordshire section, in particular Mr. B.'s "proposals," serve as a concise summation of the general movement of the novel so far. Trying one last time to induce Pamela to stay, Mr. B. offers to make all her family happy and admits that he has been "awaken'd to see more Worthiness in" her than he "ever...saw in any Lady in the World" (83).[7] Continuing, he swears "as God is my Witness" (84), that he intends no injury to her by this confession, that he has no ulterior motive in mind in this instance. Pamela, however, unable to forget his recent attempts on her and his near success, answers: "I cannot, Sir, believe you after what has passed! How many Ways are there to undo poor Creatures! Good God, protect me this one time, and send me to my poor Father's Cot in Safety" (84). Infuriated, as he generally is by references to Divine support throughout the initial section, Mr. B., directly alluding to the struggle which has almost consumed his good qualities, states: "Strange, damn'd Fate...that when I speak so solemnly, I can't be believed...My Pride of Birth and Fortune, (damn them both!...since they cannot obtain Credit with you, but must add to your Suspicions) will not let me stoop at once; and I ask you but for a Fortnight's Stay, that after this Declaration, I may pacify these proud Demands upon me" (84). At this, Pamela begins to recite the Lord's Prayer, and, although Mr. B. tells her to stop and jokingly refers to her as "a perfect Nun," she concludes, with eyes "lifted up to Heaven, Lead me not into Temptation. But deliver me from Evil, O my good God" (84). Amused, Mr. B. leaves her alone to consider his "proposal."

Immediately following this meeting, Pamela "tortur'd with twenty different Thoughts in a Minute" (84), debates with herself over the wisdom

of staying an extra fortnight. At first, she thinks that to stay could do no harm, especially with Mrs. Jervis present to give her the same protection which had been sufficient to preserve her on numerous occasions in the past. Not content with this reasoning, she then worries that she might have greater difficulty withstanding Mr. B.'s kindness than his anger, yet is able to counter this fear by hoping that "the same Protecting Grace" in which she previously has confided would be sufficient to prevent such a danger. While wishing to believe that Mr. B.'s open avowal of "love" is honorable and that it implies a sincere desire to abandon his attempts upon her, she nevertheless comments finally upon the major flaw in his proposal by stating: "He talks, thought I, of his Pride of Heart, and Pride of Condition; O these are in his Head, and in his Heart too, or he would not confess them to me at such an Instant. Well then, thought I, this can only be to seduce me" (84). Carrying her reasoning a step further, she notes that if he is insincere it would be easy for him "to send Mrs. Jervis and the Maids out of the way...so that all the Mischief he design'd" her "might be brought about in less than that Time" (84). Resolving to "trust all to Providence," she decides to decline his offers, no matter how generous, and return home (84, 85).

At their next meeting, Pamela is promised money, and, in place of himself for her husband, an offer of some worthy man to "protect" her "Virtue" (86). Immediately suspicious, and in yet another statement revealing the alteration which lust and pride have made in her master's initial character, she muses: "O black, perfidious Creature...what an Implement art thou in the Hands of Lucifer, to ruin the innocent Heart" (86). Discovering that Mr. B. has his Lincolnshire chaplain, Mr. Williams, in mind for her husband, and a generous allowance for her parents, she requests additional time to consider these offers. Granted this, she

rejoices to be free of him and states:

> O what a Scene of Wickedness was here laid down for all my wretched Life. Black-hearted Wretch! How I hate him!--For at first, as you'll see by what I have written, he would have made me believe other things; and this of Mr. Williams, I believe, came into his Head after he walked out from his Closet, as I suppose, to give himself time to think, as well as me, how to delude me better: But the Covering was now too thin, and easy to be seen through (86).

After this observation on the transparency of Mr. B.'s contrivances, Pamela completely rejects his proposal, and, instead of being returned home, is abducted to Lincolshire.

One of the most striking features of the Bedfordshire section is Mr. B.'s "progression" from the "best of Gentlemen" to an "Implement...in the Hands of Lucifer," from seeming to be "an Angel" to being revealed as a "Black-hearted Wretch." Accompanying his changing character and appearance is the growth of his pride, which however much he struggles against, nevertheless prods him into devising various "contrivances" designed to dominate and ruin an innocent maidservant. Initial rebuffs and appeals to God on the part of this terrified and frequently confused maidservant prompt a reaction that increasingly is arrogant and seemingly indifferent to any moral or ethical considerations. Rather than admit to any wrongdoing himself, he consistently places the blame upon others, most notably Pamela, and appears shocked that he is not held in reverence by his own servants. He continually demands to be respected as a "Master," and yet acts in a way suggestive of a brute. Instead of being the "best of Gentlemen," supposedly a good example to his servants, his pride and growing delight in "contrivances" reveal him to be a man in serious danger of becoming in fact a "Workman" of "Lucifer," and a master totally lacking in the "Fear of God" (73) which alone can insure the continuation of a

well-ordered household. When he finds Pamela's "Virtue was not to be subdu'd", he finally abducts her (89). This abduction, crowning as it does his other acts of pride, sets in motion not only Pamela's most severe trials but also his own. In the following section, as Pamela's beliefs come to be tested, Mr. B. must come to learn, through her example, the folly of both pride and immorality.

The episodes thus far examined also demonstrate the limited nature of Pamela's awareness of the validity, in the real world, of the doctrines and beliefs which she tacitly has accepted from her elders. Her awareness at this point is limited by virtue of the human condition itself, by the difficulty which man has, especially within a providential world order, in comprehending at the time of occurrence the larger significance of events which seem, on the surface at least, to be without purpose, or even antithetical to the preservation of the good. It is only after her abduction that a steady alteration in the nature of her appeals to God is noticeable. Writing from Mr. B.'s Lincolshire estate, she describes her departure from Bedfordshire and mentions that as she was preparing to leave, the Steward, Longman, assured her that, although returning to the poverty of her parents's home, "Providence" would "find" her out and "reward" her for her goodness (95). This statement represents only the second time "Providence" is mentioned in the initial Bedfordshire scenes. The first time, as noted earlier, occurred when she was determining to return home despite Mr. B.'s "generous" offers of material comfort, and represented, significantly, her initial decision to trust in the active support of a power greater than herself or her supporters to resolve her present "trials" for the best.[8] Generally, however, while in Bedfordshire and under the protection of concerned servants, there is little chance for her to rely fully upon the strength which can be derived from Christian beliefs and doctrines.

Although she certainly believes in God, she nevertheless has trouble throughout this section of the novel in completely relying on His intervening power. That her trial continues and is intensified in isolation in Lincolnshire, is, in some measure, the result of her need (as well as that of Mr. B.) to become more aware of a power and justice which are able to turn misery into a blessing and despair into understanding. That God is indeed contriving "for the best," actively engaging Himself in her defense even during these scenes, using as instruments of His Divine power those very human beings upon whom she has come to rely, becomes evident to her later in the novel, and, like most humans, only after the severest testing of her beliefs. At this point in her story, however, all is obscure, with the only certainty for her being the necessity to flee her present temptations.

NOTES

Chapter Four

[1]The "testing" of Pamela and her growing awareness or perception has been noted by recent critics, notably Dorothy Parker, "The Time Scheme of Pamela and the Character of B.," TSLL, XI (1969), 695-704; John A. Dussinger, "What Pamela Knew: An Interpretation," JEGP, LXIX, 3 (July, 1970), 377-393; Stuart Wilson, "Richardson's Pamela: An Interpretation," PMLA, 88, 1 (January, 1973), 79-91. While they do not credit him, William Hazlitt suggested as much when he stated of Pamela that "the interest of the story increases with the dawn of understanding and reflection in the heroine: her sentiments gradually expand themselves, like opening flowers." Works, ed., P.P. Howe, 21 vols (London: Dent, 1930-34), VI, pp. 118, 119.

[2]Although Pamela relates that she had read this phrase "in a Book a Night or two before," it still appears to be a spontaneous and sincere appeal for Divine protection. Despite the fact that she is saved at this point, the influence of any "Heavenly" assistance seems obscured in her own mind by the timely arrival of Mrs. Jervis.

[3]For recent evaluations of Mr. B.'s character and his "pride," see Needham's "Richardson's Characterization of Mr. B. and Double Purpose in Pamela"; Parker's "The Time Scheme of Pamela and the Character of B."; and Dussinger's "What Pamela Knew: An Interpretation," in particular p. 389 where he notes in passing Mr. B.'s change "from angel to Lucifer, from master to rake, from childhood friend to seducer": See also M. Kinkead-Weekes's "Introduction" to the 1962 Everyman Edition of Pamela.

[4]It is interesting to note that Mr. B.'s actions during this scene, evidence of his increasing struggle, make him appear "mad" to Pamela (62).

[5]This scene also contains an additional instance of Mr. B.'s continuing struggle. Still fearful over the adverse opinion of others, he rightly concludes that he has "rais'd a Hornet's Nest about" his own "Ears, that, as far as" he knows, "may have stung to Death" his "Reputation" (69). In general, however, he appears more concerned about "demeaning" himself by hiding in her closet (70) than in owning up to the seriousness of his recent actions, or acknowledging any power to be greater than his own.

[6]Eaves and Kimpel point out: "Birth-day" clothes are a "suit of clothes to be worn at Court on the King's birthday" (Pamela, fn. 1, p. 70).

[7]This admission is prepared for by Mr. B.'s earlier statement that all that has happened "was much against" his "Heart," and done only "in hopes to frighten" Pamela to his "Purposes" (83). Although he further claims that her "Behavior before honest Longman" and her words during the "Bundle" scene (78-81) have caused this change in him (83), the subsequent disparity between his "words" and his "actions," including his unsettled behavior, reveal that his struggle is continuing.

[8]It is important, however, for what takes place later in the novel that she ends on this note of "trust" in the providential support of God. However unclear to Pamela at present, it pointedly is made clear to her in the Lincolnshire section that security arises not from a dependence upon others, but rather from reliance upon a personal and tested strength, a strength ultimately supplemented and supported by the providential concern of God.

CHAPTER FIVE

"The unsearchable Wisdom of God": The Ways of Providence and the Reward of Virtue.

Following Pamela's departure for home and subsequent abduction to Lincolnshire, Mr. B. disappears from the narrative (at least physically) for almost seventy pages. Although not personally present, his influence is felt everywhere, and it soon becomes apparent that he is systematically isolating her from all human support. For Pamela, this growing isolation, as well as the fact that she has been "vilely trick'd" (93) and placed under the control of strangers, soon results in "bewilderment" in the face of Mr. B.'s contrivances. This initial bewilderment is most noticeable in her language which, however similar to her diction in Bedfordshire, contains new and significant features.

The most striking feature of the early Lincolnshire scenes, nevertheless, is Pamela's continuing dependence, however, accompanied by an increasing hope for direct Divine assistance, upon the support of others. Having resolved to escape, every effort is made to enlist human assistance. At first hopeful that the Lincolnshire servants may not be indifferent to her plight, she soon is disillusioned when they appear instead to be "devoted" absolutely to Mrs. Jewkes (104). Added to this problem, she also discovers that Mrs. Jewkes, herself, a formidable obstacle, time and again answers even minor attempts at deception or appeals to basic humanity with swift brutality. Seeing the necessity to set her "Wits at Work," and, hoping that "God will favour" her plans to escape, she nevertheless

still hopes for "such an obliging honest-hearted Man as John" to help her (106). Although this "honest John" soon arrives with a letter from Mr. B., whatever hope this raises is quickly destroyed when she discovers that her master is unchanged. Answering this letter, in which Mr. B. now finds his promise not to approach her without leave a "Difficulty" (109), she can find no reason for his actions except that she "is not able to defend herself, nor has a Friend that can right her" (110). John's disclosures that he had acted all along as his master's "tool" in Bedfordshire, cause Pamela, almost in despair, to comment on the Squire's growing corruption and apparent pleasure at corrupting others (112). She cannot understand why he seems to take so much pain "to do the Devil's work" (112), and finds all that is happening to her "strange" and without apparent purpose. Finally, in a statement similar to the earlier one in Bedfordshire, she further marvels that her master, previously so afraid of his own servants, does not fear the "All-seeing Eye" of God, and worries that he will succeed unless "God" prevents it (112).

Her reliance upon God's support, however, soon is overshadowed by the presence of Mr. Williams, Mr. B's Lincolnshire Chaplain. Contriving to exchange correspondence by means of the "two Tiles upon" a "Parsley bed" (113), Pamela, now hoping for the assistance of the neighboring gentry, concludes her first letter to him by commenting: "I say no more, but commit this to the happy Tiles, and to the Bosom of that Earth from which I hope my Deliverance will take Root, and bring forth such Fruit, as may turn to my inexpressible Joy, and your eternal Reward, both here and hereafter" (115). Her desire for earthly human support, momentarily abandoned before the arrival of Mr. Williams, is further emphasized during a scene in which Mrs. Jewkes beats her. Stunned, Pamela looks around "as if" she "wanted somebody to help" her, only to realize that she "had

nobody" (116). Her fear causes her to be "half out of" her "Wits" over the passion of Mrs. Jewkes, and she attempts to soothe the housekeeper so that she will not forbid visits to the garden and the chance to continue the correspondence with Mr. Williams (117).

In his first letter, Mr. Williams replies that he will certainly attempt to enlist support for Pamela in the neighborhood, and further informs her that they must proceed with caution as even the local "Post-house" is under the Squire's control (118). In spite of such evidence of Pamela's growing isolation, Mr. Williams nevertheless assures her that, although his "whole Dependence is upon the Squire", he "would sooner forfeit all" his "Hopes upon him, and trust in God for the rest, than not assist" her "if possible" (118). Pamela's response to "this pleasing Letter" contains a further hope that the gentry will assist her and a request for a copy of Mr. Williams's key to the garden gate so that if all else fails she can escape "any-where" and trust "to any compassionate Body" she might meet, rather than remain where there is a real danger of ruin (119). Before she can receive an answer, however, a letter is delivered from Mr. B. which reveals that he still is struggling with his "proud Heart" and at present fears only her "disregard" of him (121). Learning further that he "repents," not for his barbarous treatment of her, but for promising to await her consent to his visit, she fearfully places supreme hope on the efforts of Mr. Williams. Her fears soon are increased when she discovers that none of the gentry, including Mr. Williams's superior, the Reverend Mr. Peters, will meddle in the Squire's business.

While Mr. Williams's efforts continue until he is jailed for debt by Mr. B., there is little chance from this point that they will succeed, but his last letter, with its "half-angry" advice that she quiet her fears

and trust that "God Almighty will not desert" her, coupled with that of her parents, at least affords Pamela some comfort. Once again, however, this comfort is short-lived when she "accidently" receives Mr. B.'s instructions to Mrs. Jewkes and discovers that the Squire is planning to revenge himself on her for her activities with Mr. Williams. His passion now dominant, Mr. B. appears half-crazed with jealousy, vows to jail Mr. Williams, and threatens within three weeks a journey to Lincolnshire to "decide" Pamela's "Fate" (145). Having already declared that only a "Miracle" could save her if Mr. B.'s offer of Williams was a sham (133), she now, in her despair, prays for a "Thunderbolt" to strike her or for some means to escape the seemingly imminent destruction of her virtue (145). With the imprisonment of Williams, she is finally completely isolated, though at the same time we become aware that Mr. B. is beginning to be plagued and thwarted by the very "tools" he has used to achieve his present ends. John Arnold, once his most trusted agent, has proved a "Villain" (144), and Mr. Williams, slyly suggested by the Squire on several occasions as a possible husband for Pamela, has attempted to effect her escape.[1] For Mr. B. a process seems to have begun whereby his very "endeavours shall be" his "hindrance; shall work" him "backwards, and set" him "at a greater distance" from what he desires.[2]

At first, Mr. B.'s letters had caused Pamela to believe that, since her "Fate" was now absolutely decided, it was vain "to contend against" her "evil Destiny, and the superiour Arts of" her "barbarous Master" (146). Later, however, while vowing to "resign" herself "to God's Will, and prepare to expect the worst" (146), she is horrified over the arrival of Mr. B.'s "honest Swiss", Mr. Colbrand (147). At this point, she finally decides to trust in her own strength and once again attempt to escape. Praying to God, the "gracious Protector of oppressed Innocence",

to "prosper...this last Effort of" His "poor Handmaid" that she "may escape the crafty Devices and Snares that have already begun to entangle" her "Virtue" (149), she then commits herself and the success of her escape to His "Providence" (150).

This escape scene[3] marks a crucial turning point in Pamela's story and contains religious language significantly different from that previously seen. Writing later of her attempted escape, Pamela places emphasis upon the direct "interposition" of "divine Grace" in saving her from a "worse" enemy than any she had yet encountered. That "enemy" was her own despair, a sense of hopelessness which almost drove her to suicide when her "Stratagem" failed. And though "ruin'd" in all her "Contrivances" (150), she nevertheless "rejoices" in her deliverance and growing trust in the reality of a Divine "purpose" shaping the events of her life. The episode seems to indicate that, at the very least, a "supernatural" force indeed is interested in the outcome of her "trials." Her near success itself confuses her captors and strikes them with awe, with Mrs. Jewkes likening it to the "carrying" away of "St. Peter...out of Prison by some Angel" (154).

During the attempted escape, Pamela, discovering that her key is useless, tries to scale the garden wall only to be badly bruised by a falling brick and knocked senseless. Seeing that all her "Contrivances" had failed, she then decides to throw herself into the pond and drown. Her "maim'd" condition, however, causes her to take a long time reaching the pond, and during this interval, which happily "gave Time for a little Reflection", she reports that a "Ray of Grace" darted in upon her momentarily "benighted Mind" (151). She credits the appearance of this "Ray of Grace" to her own physical injuries and relates how it initiated an internal debate over the wisdom of committing suicide to avoid the dangers

surrounding her. Sitting "on the sloping Bank," she tries to find some "hope" to cling to, something in her present condition and surroundings which may presage a possibility of deliverance:

> I then consider'd, and after I had cast about in my Mind, every thing that could make me hope, and saw no Probability; a wicked Woman devoid of all Compassion! a horrid Helper just arriv'd in this dreadful Colbrand! an angry and resenting Master, who now hated me, and threaten'd the most afflicting Evils! and, that I should, in all Probability, be depriv'd even of the Opportunity I now had before me, to free myself from all their Persecutions (152).

Despite so "hopeless" a situation and the "Probability" of certain ruin, she then says: "What hast thou to do, distressed Creature...but to throw thyself upon a merciful God, (who knows how innocently I suffer) to avoid the merciless Wickedness of those who are determin'd on my Ruin" (152). Even with this determination to trust in God, however, she once more despairs, decides to drown herself, and romantically envisions the pity and sorrow of her captors when they find her "poor Corse" (152). But once again her bruises slow her down and give time to reconsider; weighing carefully the consequences of what she is about to do, she chides herself and thinks: "What art thou about to do, wretched Pamela? how knowest thou, tho' the Prospect be dark to thy short-sighted Eye, what God may do for thee, even when all human Means fail?" (152). After much self-debate, and deciding that her present "Sufferings" may be God's method to make her rely not only upon His "Grace" but also His more active "Assistance," she finally decides to place complete trust in God, and to avoid utterly the temptation of the "grand Enemy" (Satan) to despair:

> What then, presumptuous Pamela, dost thou here, thought I? Quit with Speed these guilty Banks and flee from these dashing Waters, that even in their sounding Murmurs, this still Night, reproach thy

> Rashness! Tempt not God's Goodness on the mossy Banks, that have been Witnesses of thy guilty Intentions; and while thou has Power left thee, avoid the tempting Evil, lest thy grand Enemy, now repuls'd by Divine Grace, and due Reflection, return to the Charge with a Force that thy Weakness may not be able to resist! And lest one rash Moment destroy all the Convictions which now have aw'd thy rebellious Mind into Duty and Resignation to the Divine Will (153)!

Although the episode ends with Pamela recaptured and placed under even closer surveillance by Mrs. Jewkes and the other servants, she now can view her recent "Trials" and those to come as being under the direct control of "Providence" (156). While in the scenes to come, she may, as all human beings, occasionally fail to see the equity of her situation, or may complain of the lack of sympathetic friends, at least a beginning has been made whereby she will emerge from this time of testing a stronger person than she was during the sequestered days in Bedfordshire. And although her "Contrivances" are at an end (156), her "will" and her increasing strength, derived from the testing of her beliefs, nevertheless enable her to ward off the temptations and terrors yet surrounding her. She never becomes hardened or cynical; still distressed over the alteration in her master, she is even able to feel joy, for her "good Lady's sake", at his near escape from drowning (157). At the same time, she is more determined than ever to preserve her virtue. And with the arrival of Mr. B., there begins what can be viewed as the "second movement" of the Lincolnshire section: the final conflict between lustful pride and what has been revealed to be a Divine intervention for the support of suffering innocence.

At their first meeting, Mr. B. once again affects a "stern and majestic Air" and attempts to awe and terrify Pamela (160). Almost fainting, she is advised by Mrs. Jewkes to "confess" her "unworthy Behaviour, and beg his Honour's Forgiveness of all" her "Faults" (160). She is "struck

to the Heart at this," but recovering herself and lifting her "Eyes to Heaven" says instead: "God forgive you, Sir" (160). This answer sends Mr. B. into a "great Passion" and he orders her to leave and reconsider her behavior. Soon calling for her to wait on him at table, he wrathfully condemns Mr. Williams for his part in her attempts to escape and accuses her of tempting the minister "to undo himself...at a Time when I was on the Point of making him happy for his Life" (162). Knowing that pleading is useless, she nevertheless states: "I have done, Sir, I have done! I have a strange Tribunal to plead before. The poor Sheep, in the Fable, had such an one; when it was try'd before the Vultur, on the Accusation of the Wolf" (162).[4] Mr. B. then humorously answers, accepting her characterization of himself and Mrs. Jewkes: "So, Mrs. Jewkes...you are the Wolf, I the Vultur, and this poor innocent Lamb, on her Trial before us.--Oh! you don't know how well this Innocent is read in Reflection. She has Wit at Will, when she has a mind to display her own romantick Innocence, at the Price of other People's Characters" (162). Protesting that she did not mean to compare Mr. B. to a "Vultur" in reality, Pamela is told to be silent, but musters enough courage to say: "Well...since I must not speak, I will hold my Peace: But there is a righteous Judge, who knows the Secrets of all Hearts! and to him I appeal" (162). Mr. B. pridefully counters this by saying: "See there!...now this meek, good Creature is praying for Fire from Heaven upon us! O she can curse most heartily, in the Spirit of Christian Meekness, I'll assure you" (162). Continuing to mock her, he calls Pamela to him, praises the beauty of her "Shape" and threatens that they "have a dreadful Reckoning to make" (163). Trying to kiss her, he says that "if it were not for the thought of this cursed Parson, I believe in my Heart, so great is my Weakness,

that I could yet forgive this ingriguing little Slut, and take her to my Bosom" (163).[5] This momentary good intention is quickly squelched by Mrs. Jewkes, who advises that he should "take her to" his "Bosom" indeed and "by to-morrow Morning...bring her to a better Sense of her Duty" (163). Terrified over this "Vile" advice, Pamela "could only stammer out a passionate Exclamation to Heaven, to protect" her "Innocence", an exclamation which is met with "Ridicule" and mockery (163). Sending her off to consider the "Articles" he shortly will give her, Mr. B. cautions Pamela that continued resistance will insure her only a "more dreadful Fate" and that a refusal will only more securely fix her "Doom" (163).

Mr. B. not only mocks appeals to Heaven or a Divine Justice, but also pridefully raises himself above any consideration of such a justice. That he is not totally "depraved" is suggested by his momentary and tenuous desire to "forgive" Pamela. Despite this, however, the evil counsel of Mrs. Jewkes is enough to sway his purpose and spur him on to even greater acts of indecency. While the warnings he has received, his near drowning and the frequent admonitions of Pamela and Mrs. Jervis, so far have not touched him in any permanent way, there at least is still the fact that he has not committed the ultimate crime against his maidservant. The remaining scenes in Lincolnshire demonstrate how the pride and lust of Mr. B. are consumed and defeated by the active and "merciful interventions" of the Providence in which Pamela has begun so wholeheartedly to place her trust.

The scenes preceding the attempted rape, in particular those involving the "seven articles," continue to display both Mr. B.'s struggle and Pamela's growing awareness of God's "good Pleasure" and her own growing strength in the face of what seems to be probable ruin. Mr. B.'s seven articles, pridefully asserting that her answer to them "will

absolutely decide" her "Fate" (164), are rejected by Pamela, who states that although her "poor Strength will not be able to defend" her, "yet" she "will be innocent of Crime in" her "Intention, and in the Sight of God"; to Him she vows "to leave the avenging of all" her "Wrongs, in his own good Time and Manner" (164). In replying to Article VI, in which Mr. B. threatens that he means to "gratify" his "Passion" for her whether she consents to his proposals or not, Pamela stoutly declares that if she "cannot escape the Violence of Man," she hopes "by God's Grace" she "shall have nothing to reproach" herself "for not doing all in" her "Power to avoid" her "Disgrace" (166). If her will bears no part in her ruin, she hopes to be able to "safely appeal to the great God," her "only Refuge and Protector" (166). Despite the fact that she is a "poor, weak, friendless, unhappy Creature...too fully in" Mr. B.'s "Power" (167), she "commits" her "Cause" to God (168).

During the confrontation over his articles, Mr. B. at one point says that if Pamela's decision "be not what you think will please me...dear Girl, take it back again, and reconsider it; for if I have this as your absolute Answer, and I don't like it, you are undone; for I will not sue meanly, where I can command" (168). The allusion to Pamela as a "dear Girl," in the midst of otherwise imperious demands, is followed by actions which thoroughly confuse her. Offering to augment his proposed settlement "to two Thirds of" his "Estate" because he "cannot live without" her, he then states that "since the thing is gone so far" he "will not" live without her and concludes the meeting by attempting to kiss her (168). While struggling with his "Passion" at this point, Mr. B. again is advised by Mrs. Jewkes that he can very easily end all his troubles with Pamela by "resolving" to put "an End" to all her "Complaining and Perverseness" (169). Shortly after this advice he tries to

achieve through violence what he has been unable to achieve through bribes or terror.

If the "pond scene" represents the "high point" in the testing of Pamela's beliefs and the beginning of her more mature awareness of a Divine concern in the world, the attempted rape begins the process whereby Mr. B. is brought face to face with the true nature and possible consequences of his persecution and contrivances to seduce her. As the scene opens, Mr. B. is disguised as the supposedly "drunk" servant, Nan. Covered by her "Gown and Petticoat" with her "Apron over his Face and Shoulders," Mr. B. pretends to sleep in a chair in Pamela's bedroom. Later, while writing of the event, Pamela states of his disguise: "What Meannesses will not Lucifer make his Votaries stoop to, to gain their abominable Ends" (175). He is, at this point, not just as "cunning" as "Lucifer," or a "Workman" promoted by "Lucifer," but a very "Votary" of "Lucifer." Reminiscent again of traditional views of evil, its "protean" qualities, Mr. B., in taking for a disguise the uniform of the meanest of his servants, has, for all practical purposes, sunk as low as possible. His previous concern for the "Honour" which he believed his position should entitle him, is here of less consequence than his desire to satisfy his lust.[6]

Beginning the attack, Mr. B. sheds his disguise and his voice soon breaks upon Pamela "like a Clap of Thunder" (176). His words are almost "God-like" as he states that "Now Pamela...is the dreadful Time of Reckoning come, that I have threaten'd" (176). With both her hands secured, it seems certain that the rape will take place. At first she screams out "in such a manner, as never any body heard the like", but quickly remembers that "there was nobody to help" her (176). This does not deter her from struggling with all her strength, and she soon cries out: "O God!

my God! this Time, this one Time! deliver me from this Distress! or strike me dead this Moment" (176). Mr. B. slackens his efforts at this, and asks her to hear him out. Mrs. Jewkes, however, advises him to stop "dilly-dallying" and proceed. But, instead of being swayed by this advice, Mr. B. for the first time refuses to heed her words and even silences her. Pamela's fainting fit soon frightens him, and when she awakens, for the second time he silences Mrs. Jewkes and sends her away when her advice to seize his opportunity throws Pamela into yet another fit. Immediately following her second recovery, Mr. B. vows "By Heaven" that he will not "come in again" to her, and the scene closes with Pamela in possession of the keys to the room (177).

When it is kept in mind that Pamela herself directly attributes her survival at this point to the "timely" disabling of her "Faculties" by God (177), Mr. B.'s failure and subsequent activities are scarcely to be appreciated apart from a close association with the intervening power of God. It is not that Mr. B. is reformed instantly or "converted" by his fear over Pamela's violent fits, but rather that a beginning has been made toward altering his pride and lust. As his lust is replaced by an awareness of the felicity to be gained from a "virtuous Love," he subsequently is shown the folly of his previous attempts to seduce virtue.[7] The next day he shows "great Tenderness" toward Pamela (177), and, asking her to "Place some little Confidence in" him, assures her that although he "did intend what" she calls "the worst", he now can own that he loves her "beyond all" her "Sex, and cannot live without" her (178). From this point on, a process of mutual concession between Pamela and Mr. B. begins, a process of mutual testing whereby they both eventually come to accept the dignity and worth of each other.

In many ways, the scenes preceding the marriage emphasize the

"humanity" of both the Squire and Pamela, their need to strengthen daily a beginning reformation and to exercise continually a trust in the wisdom of God. Throughout, the difficulty in fully resolving the conflict between Mr. B.'s good qualities and his pride and delight in contrivances is complemented by Pamela's own doubts and occasional lapses in complete trust in God's intervening power. What ultimately takes place in these scenes, however, is an analysis of the human condition within a providential world order, a presentation of the frequent tendency (as evidenced by Mr. B.'s actions) to attribute to one's own will events which are essentially the result of a Divine plan, and (as evidenced by Pamela's statements) to allow moments of weakness and uncertainty to overshadow temporarily the lessons gained from the testing of religious beliefs. Two episodes preceding the wedding demonstrate the terms of this analysis: the first meeting beside the pond, and Pamela's departure for home.

Walking beside the pond, Mr. B. first relates to Pamela how her talk with Mrs. Jewkes before the attempted rape, her words "so innocent, and so full of beautiful simplicity," had "half disarmed" his "Resolutions" (184). At that time, moreover, seeing her "so watchful over" her "Virtue" and hoping "to find it otherwise," he assures her that he has since come to discover that his "Passion" for her "is increas'd," however honorably, by that very fact (184). Still attempting to excuse his actions, and professing that at least he is "not a very abandoned Profligate," he states of his present unsettled state of mind that: "Had I been utterly given up to my Passions, I should before now have gratify'd them, and not have shewn that Remorse and Compassion for you, which have repriev'd you more than once, when absolutely in my Power; and you are as inviolate a Virgin as you was when you came into my

House" (184). Mr. B. appears here to be more concerned with what went wrong with his "perfectly" conceived contrivances than he is with totally facing up to the consequences of his own actions. Perhaps because his "Pride" still "struggles hard within" him, he cannot at this point ascribe anything other than a personal reason for his failure to seduce Pamela. He speaks of his "Remorse" and "Compassion" as if they alone were responsible for Pamela's survival and should thus be gratefully praised by her. He is unable at this time either to subjugate his "Pride," or to admit unequivocally his complete love for his servant, primarily because he refuses to acknowledge any power greater than his own in bringing about the present turn of affairs. It is only after reading Pamela's narrative and following her voluntary return to him that Mr. B. truly comes to begin his reformation.[8]

Obtaining a part of Pamela's journal through the continued officiousness of Mrs. Jewkes, Mr. B. appears flippant after reading the first section. This portion, dealing as it does with her confusion and terror during her attempts to escape with the help of Mr. Williams, does little to convince him of the seriousness of his actions or the spiritual danger in which his temptations of an innocent young girl have placed him. Her account of the major escape attempt, however, seems to captivate him, and after reading it, Pamela relates that he "was very serious at my Reflections, on what God had enabled me to escape. And when he came to my Reasonings, about throwing myself into the Water, he said, Walk gently before; and seem'd so mov'd, that he turn'd away his Face from me; and I bless'd this good Sign, and began not so much to repent at his seeing this mournful Part of my Story" (208). By reading her "Reasonings," a genuine "Remorse" seems to arise and Mr. B. further is enabled to marvel at her near escape. For Pamela, however, even though

"All this look'd well" (209), fear over warnings that a "Sham-marriage" is planned to ruin her causes her again to request to be sent home safely to her parents. Enraged at this rejection following his sincere desire somehow to "atone" for his previous behavior, Mr. B.'s pride once again is inflamed, and "in a fearful Passion," he orders her to "Begone" (209). Soon granted permission to return home, Pamela relates how she was moved during her departure by his refusal to heed the advice of Mrs. Jewkes that he not let her leave "scot-free" after "all the Trouble she has cost" him (211). Standing in the doorway, Pamela begs God to bless her master "for this Instance of...Goodness" and promises to pray for him "as long as" she lives (211). The Squire, however, refuses to see her, and despite her joy at leaving the scene of her temptation, she nevertheless is troubled. Having admitted to herself her love for him, she is confused over the strange turn of events which has caused him so precipitously to grant her request. His "lordly" behavior causes her to reflect on the "Pride" which seems to be the reason for both his disquiet and her own (210), and finally to say to the Coachman, Robert, as she steps into the chariot: "here I am again! a pure Sporting-piece for the Great! a mere Tennis-ball of Fortune" (212).

Just as Mr. B.'s pride causes him to act wrathfully when his avowed "reformation" (despite all his previous lies and contrivances) is not <u>instantly</u> believed to be sincere, this last statement by Pamela may be taken as suggesting again the difficulty facing all human beings within a providential universe in discerning at the moment of occurrence the "purpose" or "reason" behind particular events.[9] She seems here at yet another "low point" in her progress toward a fuller awareness of the active concern of a Divine Providence. But as the "pond scene" prepared for her best glimpse of God's "purpose," this departure for home serves

to open her eyes more fully to the sense and meaning of all that has previously occurred. Far from being a "mere Tennis-ball of Fortune," she soon comes to stand as an "Instrument" of "Providence." What follows for Mr. B. is his transformation, by means of Pamela's example and his own progressive loss of pride, from a "Votary" of evil into a man well on his way toward true repentance.

Finally granted what she has so constantly desired, Pamela is nevertheless troubled by two letters sent after her by Mr. B. In the first of these, while he hopes that she will not expose him unnecessarily except for purposes of clearing her own conduct, he nevertheless assures her "for that," he "will suffer" himself "to be accused by" her, "and will also accuse" himself, "if it be needful" (214). Faced with these signs of a generous nature, Pamela once again confesses to herself her love for him, a love "I know not how it came, nor when it begun; but creep, creep it has, like a Thief upon me; and before I knew what was the Matter, it look'd like Love" (214). The discomfort and the uncertainty which she experiences is compounded when she receives the second letter, which shows that Mr. B. has read the remaining portions of her journal and as a result has found that he "struggles" against his "Affection" for her in "vain" (216). Still desiring to see her former letters, sent to her parents "by Williams's Conveyance," so that he can have all his "proud, and, perhaps punctilious Doubts answer'd" (216), he "begs" her to place confidence in him and return. Although at first still suspicious of his avowed change of heart, and fearful that "his Pride of Heart, and Pride of Condition, may again take place", she finally decides that by returning she "may be the means of making many happy, as well as" herself, "by placing a generous Confidence in him"

(217). This decision is indeed the right one, for what follows this voluntary reunion with Mr. B. is not only a further awareness of the power and purpose of God's Providence operating both in the world in general and in her own particular case, but also, through her example, the strengthening of the faith and resolution of her former tormentor.

Reflecting on events following Pamela's return, Mr. B. remarks, almost wonderingly, on the "uncommon Gradations," by which they both have moved to reach their approaching "Summit" of "Felicity" (229). In recounting his plot and the idea he had entertained at one point of a "Sham-marriage," he notes that at the very moment it was designed to be put into execution he abandoned the idea, not because of his own "Remorse" or "Compassion," but rather because Pamela's "white Angel got the better of" his "black one" and "inspir'd" him "with Resolutions to abandon the Project" (231). Referring to the pious example of her parents, Pamela, in a passage placing supreme emphasis upon the frequently necessary supplement to such an example of strength, states: "It is too mighty for me; and I must sit down to ponder all these Things, and to admire and bless the goodness of that Providence, which has, thro' so many intricate Mazes, made me tread the Paths of Innocence, and so amply rewarded me, for what it has enabled me to do" (232). After forgiving Mrs. Jewkes for her excessive zeal in the service of her master and hoping for continued humility amidst so many "promising Things," Pamela gives thanks to the "blessed Providence which has so visibly conducted" her "thro' the dangerous Paths" she has "trod, to this happy Moment" (234), and concludes that, although her recent sufferings seemed "formidable" to her "repining Mind," the approaching wedding, and in general the preservation of her virtue itself, causes her "for the

future" to resolve to "trust in Providence, who knows what is best for us, and frequently turns the very Evils we most dread, to be the Cause of our Happiness, and of our Deliverance from greater" (235). Mr. B.'s actions also indicate that he is well on the way toward reforming his life and seeing that his former pride was not only folly but productive of continuous turmoil. The instances of his growing reformation increase almost in direct proportion to Pamela's own conviction that a Divine power has engaged itself in their behalf. He defers to Pamela's wishes regarding the time and place of their wedding (236), confesses his wrongdoing to Mr. Williams (240, 241), praises "God" to Pamela's father for His Divine blessings (248), regrets that his "Passion" and his "Pride of Condition" caused him to tempt and terrify Pamela (255), desires to be "worthy" of her (255), and even states that: "I shall not think I can possibly deserve you, till, after your sweet Example, my future Life shall become nearly as blameless as yours" (294).

The surprise arrival of her father, certain that his daughter is "ruin'd," prompts Pamela to assure him that once he learns all, he shall see "from the Depth of Misery, what God has done for" her (251). Finally convinced of the Squire's sincerity, Mr. Andrews tells him that both he and Pamela's mother will be able now to "look back with Wonder and Joy, on the Ways of Providence" (254). Reconciled with Mr. Williams, and displaying a gentleness and kindness to all around him, Mr. B. now can "bless" God for His "Grace" in preventing him from hurrying, as the Parson informs him, "into the Commission of Sins, that the deepest Penitence could hardly have aton'd for" (261). Pamela herself credits not only this "Grace" but also "the wonderful Ways of Providence" which have used the very thing she dreaded Mr. B. seeing, her papers, as "Means to promote" her "Happiness" (261). When it is kept in mind that

the first of these papers were entrusted to God's Providence (150), Pamela's acknowledgment and praise of "the unsearchable Wisdom of God" (261) is an appropriate echo of Romans 11:33 with its insistence that "as none of the promises of God do fail, so the most are in such sort brought to pass, that, if we after consider the circuit, wherein the steps of his providence have gone, the due consideration thereof cannot choose but draw from us the selfsame words of astonishment, which the blessed Apostle hath: '0 the depth of the riches of the wisdom of God! how unsearchable are his counsels and his ways past finding out!'"[10]

Shortly before the wedding, Pamela contemplates the "seriousness" of the event and makes this vow: "I will commit all my Ways to that blessed Providence, which hitherto has so wonderfully conducted me, thro' real Evils, to this hopeful Situation" (279). In contrast to the earlier disparity between his outward and inward qualities, his "grand" appearance and growing "corruption," Mr. B. now can say to Mr. Andrews that compared to inner worth, the "outward Appearance" is "nothing" (264). On the wedding day, Mr. B. confides "that, after having been long tost by the boisterous Winds of a more culpable Passion," he has "now conquer'd it, and" is "not so much the Victim of" Pamela's "Love, all charming as" she is, "as of" her "Virtue" (286). Immediately after the wedding, Pamela remarks on the outcome of her trial and on the present character of Mr. B. by linking them with a Divine purpose: "And thus the dear, once naughty Assailer of her Innocence, by a blessed Turn of Providence, is become the kind, the generous Protector and Rewarder of it. God be evermore blessed and praised" (290).

From the wedding through the conclusion of the Lincolnshire section, events consistently are viewed as being the product of a Divine plan.[11] When visiting rakes invade their wedding day, and Mr. B. endeavors to

discourage them from a prolonged stay, Pamela has time to reflect upon her union with her former tormentor, and concludes by again committing herself to the "Mercies of the Almighty, who has led" her "thro' so many strange Scenes of Terror and Affrightment, to this happy, yet awful Moment" (295). Mr. B., prevailed upon to reinstate the Bedfordshire servants who had sided with Pamela against him, now wishes only to be "half as worthy" as she (303). In the face of her growing joy, Pamela then prays, acknowledging the duties and responsibilities which her new position dictates:

> Great and good God! as thou hast enlarged my Opportunities, enlarge also my Will, and make me delight in dispensing to others, a Portion of that Happiness which I have myself so plentifully receiv'd at the Hands of thy gracious Providence! Then shall I not be useless in my Generation!--Then shall I not stand a single Mark of God's Goodness to a poor worthless Creature, that in herself is of so poor Account in the Scale of Beings, a mere Cypher on the wrong Side of a Figure; but shall be placed on the right Side; and, tho' nothing worth in myself, shall give Signification by my Place, and multiply the Blessings I owe to God's Goodness, who has distinguish'd me by so fair a Lot (303)!

The evidences of Pamela's own maturity and strength, as well as Mr. B.'s alteration and beginning reformation, continue to the end of the section. Whether being viewed by the wife of his dying neighbor "as their good Angel" (316), or admitting that his past life is not his "Boast" but rather his "Concern" (357), or acknowledging his own "Imperfections" (368), he is no longer a man consumed by selfishness and indifference to religious considerations. As a result of "the unsearchable Wisdom of God", Mr. B.'s plots and selfish contrivances have failed, and from this failure he has been led to admit his wrongdoing and subsequently escape the progressive hardness of heart so evident in Richardson's later portrayal of Lovelace. The resolution continues as even

Lady Davers's wrath is turned into wonder that virtue has triumphed over lust and has met with a deserved reward (373). Traveling to Bedfordshire, Pamela blesses "God at every Turn, and at every Stage" and sees her present journey as a "delightful" contrast "to that which, so contrary to all" her "Wishes, and so much to" her "Apprehensions, carry'd" her "hence to the Lincolnshire House" (377). Her arrival in Bedfordshire causes her to view the "Dangers" she has escaped and the happiness she now feels returning "a joyful Wife" as the result of the "Favour and Mercies of God Almighty," blessings which Mr. B. hopes will continue so that he can further "reward" her for all her "Sweetness" (377). The time of testing in Lincolnshire is over and what follows is the restoration of the well-ordered Bedfordshire household.

NOTES

Chapter Five

[1]For a discussion of Mr. B.'s being plagued by his own "tools," see Gwendolyn Needham's "Richardson's Characterization of Mr. B. and Double Purpose in Pamela," fn. 27, p. 442, and pp. 459, 460.

[2]Edward Young, A Vindication of Providence, from Works, p. 363. In this passage, Young speaks of the danger of using means contrary to the will of God to achieve a particular purpose.

[3]The significance of the "pond scene" to Pamela's story has been noted many times by critics, including Anna Barbauld, who says of Pamela's temptation to suicide that "considerations of piety at length prevail, and she determines to trust to Providence." Correspondence, I, p. lvii. See also M. Kinkead-Weekes, "Introduction" to the Everyman Edition of Pamela, pp. ix-x; Godfrey Frank Singer, The Epistolary Novel. Its Origin, Development, Decline, and Residuary Influence (1933; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1963), p. 67; Clara L. Thomson, Samuel Richardson. A Biographical and Critical Study (1900; rpt. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970), p. 158; and John A. Dussinger, "Richardson's 'Christian Vocation'", p. 12.

[4]Eaves and Kimpel state that this is a "slightly inaccurate reference to No. 29 in Richardson's Aesop's Fables, 'A Dog, a Sheep, and a Wolf,' in which a dog accuses a sheep, and a kite, a wolf, and a vulture are witnesses, but no judge is named." Pamela, fn. 1, p. 162.

[5]This statement seems to reveal both the struggle of Mr. B. and the unrest which his own "tools" continue to foment..

[6]For an alternative "transvestite" view of this disguise, however, see John A. Dussinger, "What Pamela Knew: An Interpretation," p. 390.

[7]Cf. Needham, p. 467. Despite Needham's correct observation that Mr. B. is not instantly converted but rather shown the error of his ways by the steadfast example of Pamela, she nevertheless seems to de-emphasize any "change" in his character by stating that "As presented by his creator, Mr. B. is neither devil nor angel nor 'booby,' but a very human arrogant young male, divided in mind and heart, who experiences salutary self-discipline when he encounters Pamela, a servant educated as a gentlewoman, trained in virtue and piety, and indomitable in their defense. Though he learns much about human nature and values, the dominant egoism of his nature remains basically the same and makes him a consistently understandable individual, if not wholly likable. The characterization remains a portrait, not a study like Meredith's The Egoist,

because Richardson did not sufficiently possess the Comic Spirit's oblique light" (473). It is difficult to square this theory of "egoism" with the growing humility and concern so evident in his character in the following scenes. See also John A. Dussinger, "What Pamela Knew: An Interpretation," p. 386; Dorothy Parker, pp. 699, 700, 703, and particularly p. 704 where she sums up what has happened to Mr. B. by stating: "The difference in him is not in personality, but in character; his wildness and passion are now regulated by moral virtue."

[8]The significance of her return and Mr. B.'s reading of her narrative as important to their final union has been noted by numerous critics; in particular, see Dussinger, "What Pamela Knew", p. 386; Needham, p. 466; and Parker, p. 703.

[9]This process frequently was emphasized by writers using "Poetic Justice" in their works. As Richard H. Tyre points out, speaking of the early eighteenth-century dramatists and "The Works of God": "The variety of His works, they believed, was obvious to any observer, but the regularity, which in daily life was largely hidden from man's finite mind, was what they believed must be made evident in their plays to make them meaningful and thus evocative of pity and fear." "Versions of Poetic Justice in the Early Eighteenth Century," p. 35.

[10]Richard Hooker, The Works of That Learned and Judicious Divine Mr. Richard Hooker with an Account of His Life and Death by Isaac Walton, arranged by the Reverend John Keble, M.A., 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1888), III, p. 707.

[11]For Gerald A. Baker, however, Pamela in fact "reinterprets past events in order to see evidence of divine approval and reward." "The Complacent Paragon: Exemplary Characterization in Richardson," SEL, IX, 3 (Summer, 1969), 509. I think that such an assessment fails to consider the "stages" whereby both Pamela and Mr. B. finally arrive at an awareness of the Divinely ordered world they inhabit, and, further, tends to make Pamela herself a character incapable of growth, complete from the first, and untouched by such things as the abduction, contemplated suicide, and the numerous other "trials" of her virtue.

CHAPTER SIX

"What God has done": The final theme of *Pamela*.

During Pamela's first meeting with Mrs. Jervis after her return, she tells the housekeeper that she does not yet know "what God has done" and hopes only to glorify "God, the Author of all" her "Happiness" for the "Mercies" she has received at His "Hand" (378). And when the Steward, Longman, says to her a short time later, "God bless you, my sweet Lady... as now, God be praised, I may call you. Did I not tell you, Madam, that Providence would find you out" (378), his words hardly can be viewed as a stock-greeting, or as another way of saying "How *lucky* you have been," but rather are additional proof not only of the faith of Longman, but also of what Pamela herself and all those influenced by her have seen to have actually happened. She says to John Arnold: "forget every thing that's past, *John*!--Your dear good Master will, and so will I. For God has wonderfully brought about all these Things, by the very Means I once thought most grievous" (384). Although Mr. B. is not yet brought to a complete belief in God or the duties of a Christian,[1] he at least can express to Pamela, speaking from his own recent experience, the hope that "the God" whom she delights "to serve" will "bless...more and more" his "dear Angel," and further that "after" her "sweet Example," he "shall be better and better" (385). Later, she hopes that when Lady Davers comes to read her papers, "she will see that it is all God Almighty's Doings; and that a Gentleman of [Mr. B.'s] Parts and Knowledge was not to

be drawn in by such a poor young Body as" her (388). In a letter far different in tone from her first one with its naïve trust in the goodness of man and her tacit acknowledgment that "God will not let me want," she summarizes the essence of her story:

> All...I value myself upon, is, that God has raised me to a Condition to be useful in my Generation, to better Persons than myself. This is my Pride: And I hope this will be <u>all</u> my Pride. For what was I of myself!--All the Good I can do, is but a poor third-hand Good; for my dearest Master himself is but the Second-hand. GOD, the All-gracious, the All-good, the All-bountiful, the All-mighty, the All-merciful, GOD, is the First: To HIM, therefore, be all the Glory (407)!

In the "brief Observations" which follow Pamela's last letter, Richardson himself stresses the significance of Providence in the novel, and urges that "good CLERGYMEN" see that "whatever Displeasure the doing of their Duty may give, for a Time, to their proud Patrons, Providence will, at last, reward their Piety, and turn their Distresses to Triumph" (410). Referring to the Andrews, he advises, "let those, who are reduced to a low Estate, see, that Providence never fails to reward their Honesty and Integrity; and that God will, in his own good Time, extricate them, by means unforeseen, out of their present Difficulties, and reward them with Benefits unhop'd for" (410). Summing up the "meaning" of Pamela's "trials," he urges: "Let the <u>desponding Heart</u> be comforted by the happy Issue which the Troubles and Trials of the lovely PAMELA met with, when they see, in her Case, that no Danger nor Distress, however inevitable or deep to their Apprehensions, can be out of the Power of Providence to obviate or relieve; and which, as in various Instances in her Story, can turn the most seemingly grievous Things to its own Glory, and the Reward of suffering Innocence; and that, too, at a Time when all human Prospects seem to fail" (410-411).

Pamela's steadfastness throughout the "tests" and "trials" of her virtue, and the reward of that steadfastness with the concurrent reclamation of Mr. B., are meaningful, it seems to me, only in the context of a world order over which it is believed that "Providence" rules. The knowledge and subsequent strength which Pamela herself acquires from isolation and those times "when all human Prospects" seemed "to fail," is based upon a growing and tested awareness that, in Isaac Barrow's words, "God is not unconcerned," especially "when innocence is grossly abused, or sorely beset; when piety is fiercely opposed, or cunningly undermined."[2] Those times in the novel when Pamela is "saved," dissuaded from suicide or protected from rape, however improbable, "fantastic," or "silly" they may seem to the casual reader, are in fact fictive counterparts, thematic mirrorings, of what Richardson himself, along with the theologians and divines of the age, believed they saw occurring in everyday life. By overlooking the context of religious imagery and language in which the episodes and characters consistently are placed, Pamela might well be viewed, as Maynard Mack stated, as "a rather vulgar bourgeois success-story," with Pamela herself being "in many respects simply a pioneer capitalist, a middle-class entrepreneur of virtue," a character "who looked on her chastity not as a condition of spirit but as a commodity to be vended for the purpose of getting on."[3] Such an appraisal, failing as it does to deal with the implications raised by Pamela's "trial" and Mr. B.'s "struggle," both tends to curtail further criticism and sever the novel from its intellectual foundation. Much as Robinson Crusoe was written to "justify and honour the wisdom of Providence,"[4] Richardson, as his own words testify, undertook Pamela with a design to demonstrate "the Reward which often in this Life, a protecting Providence bestows on Goodness."[5]

NOTES

Chapter Six

[1]It is not until late in the sequel to Pamela that Mr. B. is brought to a full realization of what it means to follow religious considerations in his everyday life. See the Everyman Edition of Pamela, II, pp. 422-423.

[2]The Theological Works, I, p. 466.

[3]"Introduction" to Joseph Andrews (New York: Rinehart, 1948), pp. vii, viii.

[4]Daniel Defoe, The Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, Part I, introduction by G.H. Maynadier (Boston: Brainard, 1903), "Author's Preface", p. xxix.

[5]Sir Charles Grandison, 6 vols (Oxford: Shakespeare Head, 1929), I, p. vii.

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